

Wonderful Walk for Hope Moving, and Satisfying

By BETZI WOODMAN
(Special to TUNDRA TIMES)

The Wonderful Walk for Hope and attendant events held to benefit Hope Cottage in Anchorage are now history.

But the wonder of the big effort comes back every time officials for the cottage, Alaska's only facility to care for retarded and multi-handicapped children, receive another pledge donation or get word of yet another activity held to help the project.

It was indeed impressive that morning of May 2 to see some 4,000 people—the majority of them teenagers—start out united in the one purpose to help those unable to care for themselves.

It was even more moving to watch them stick with the grueling 31-mile walk long after the early-morning buoyancy was gone and when fatigue and pain of bone and muscle were the only sensations.

But the heart was touched, also, by the widely-scattered responses to the needs of Hope Cottage. When word got out of the facility's desperate financial plight, people made plans to "do something."

From Ketchikan to Kodiak; from Seward to Toksook Bay; from Dillingham to Unalakleet and Gambell—and places in between—the promises came that programs for Hope were in the making.

And now the volunteers are still at it, collecting the amounts pledged for their walks, rounding up proceeds from carnivals, games, concerts and parades, while others record the receipts and keep accounts of the tremendous event.

Mrs. Diane Anderson, executive secretary for the Walk for

Hope, says if one considers everyone—sponsors, helpers for volunteers, and all others who aided in miscellaneous tasks from communications to sandwich making—that more than 50,000 persons must have been involved.

And from it the Cottage hopes to come close to its \$75,000 goal. Daily the money dribbles in, often with a surprise donation by an individual. And almost daily the reports come in, telling of imaginative and heart-warming projects which raised the money.

It will be a long time before the complete report is organized. Besides walkers' pledges in Anchorage, there were proceeds from pancake breakfasts, airplane rides, motorcycle rides, food sales, flea market and pizza smorgasbord.

Walkers from Cooper Landing and Kenai journeyed many miles to join with Seward residents to make a total of 200 marchers who trekked 31 miles from Moose Pass (with sleet and snow in the mountains) to downtown Seward.

Between 300 to 400 Kodiak residents marked and raised about \$1,000 for Hope while the town teenagers held a dance for the benefit. Nearly \$700 was earned by Wasilla and Palmer walkers who suffered a down-pour of rain and a sleet storm.

Kenai's Little Theatre group earned \$100 and a man from Stuttgart, Germany sent \$100 after reading of plans in an Alaskan paper.

Scammon Bay earned \$50 and other events were planned in Kenai, Soldotna, Juneau, Talkeetna, Dillingham—there will undoubtedly be more places reporting by the time this is printed.

Two of the most colorful events took place in the Bering Sea communities of Toksook Bay and Gambell, places where cash incomes are low and needs are great, but generosity is even greater. Nearly the whole village was involved in each place.

Toksook Bay held a carnival April 24 and from the total \$60 proceeds sent a check for \$35 to Hope. Some was saved for "an oxygen tank for the village clinic and some for a party for the high school kids who will be coming home soon."

Among games played was "squirt the candle" and darts for balloons. The letter reporting the event reads:

"We went down and let the people come up. We went after 6:00 p.m. mass. Some came up walking and some came up by skidoos. We all had jobs to do. Many people played most of the games and enjoyed them. Each game was a nickel. Most of the money went to Hope. It was nice to have the people sharing fun with us."

It was snowing in Gambell when 270 marchers and 30 snow machines circled the school. Eight community organizations were involved in plans which drew 40 residents of Savoonga, the only other town on St. Lawrence Island.

These people came the 40 miles across country by snow machine.

Racer sleds were decorated for parade floats and pulled by snow machines. The unique whale pool netted \$30 at 25 cents a guess on when the first whale would be struck.

Lee Kootaaga was closest and won the barrel of fuel oil donated by the local National Guard unit.

Largest proportion of Gambell's donation of \$383.57 was realized on a raffle for such precious-in-the-north-country items as a barrel of gas, shot gun and box of groceries.

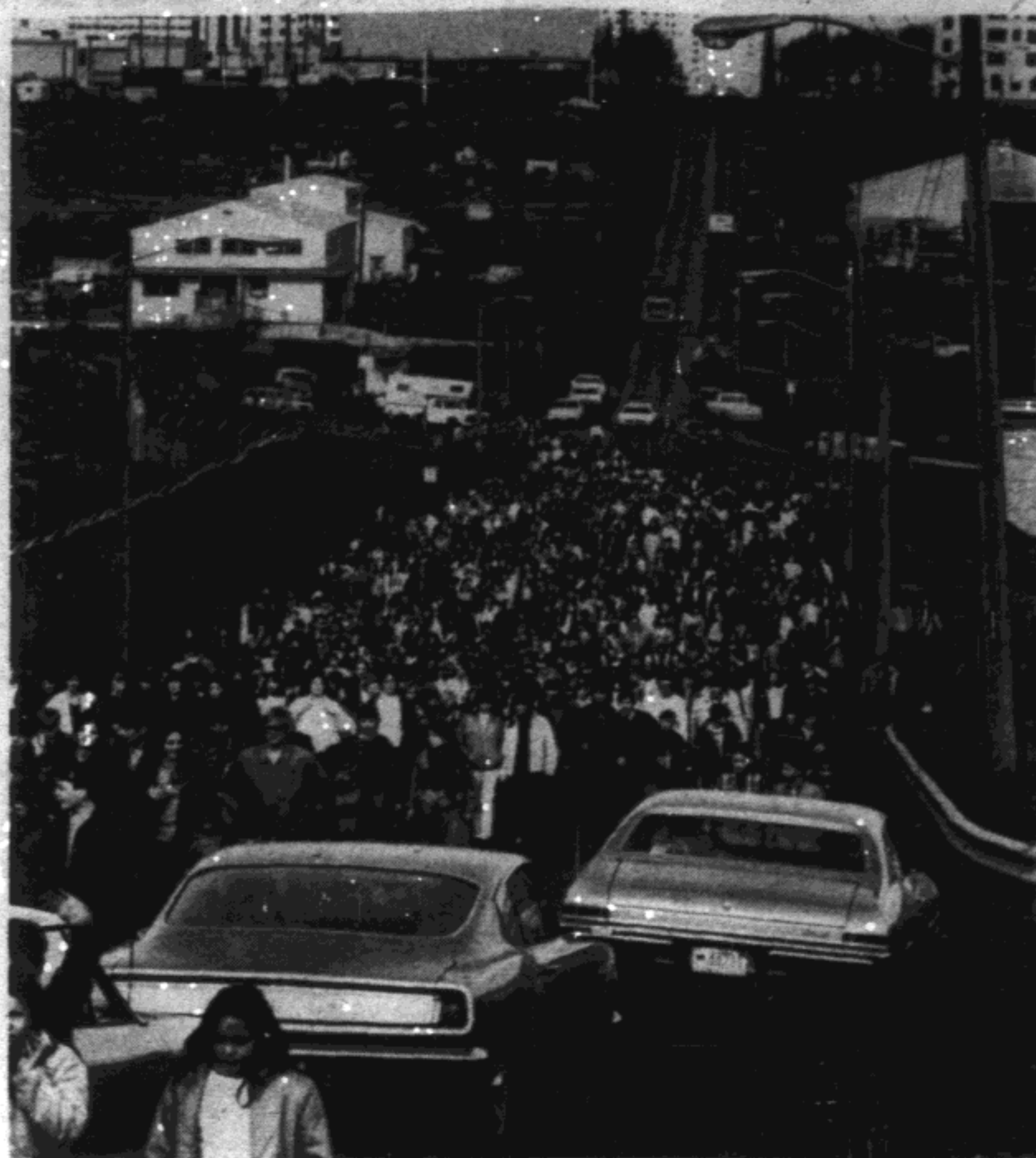
Gerard Koonooka, city council treasurer, brought the village check in person when he came to Anchorage for his summer job with a BLM survey crew. Actually, the contribution was for \$383.57 and one guinea.

A check for that unit of old English currency was sent by Mrs. C.H. Monckton of London.

Earlier the lady had written the village chiding residents for "massacreing" walrus.

Mrs. Darrol Hargreaves, wife of a teacher in the Gambell School, told the English lady "how it really is" among these people who use every possible portion of the great sea mammal. She also told of the village plans for Hope Cottage.

Mrs. Monckton then sent an apology and the check, drawn on the Barclay Bank in England. Current value is approximately \$2.50



4,000 STRONG—It was "wall to wall people" for two city blocks in Anchorage as participants in the "Walk for Hope" poured out of the downtown area and swarmed up Third Avenue going east toward Chugach Mountains.
—BETZI WOODMAN Photo



GUINEA PUZZLES—Mrs. Diane Anderson right, executive secretary for Anchorage "Walk for Hope," is also puzzling over the monetary worth of the English guinea along with Gerard Koonooka, treasurer of the Gambell City Council. A check for one guinea was donated from London, England, to add to Gambell's \$383.57 collected in their walk.
—BETZI WOODMAN Photo



GUINEA? HOW MUCH?—At the recent "Walk for Hope" at the village of Gambell on St. Lawrence Island, village treasurer Gerard Koonooka, left, found a check made out for one guinea sent to Gambell as a donation by an English woman from London, England. Gerard didn't know just how much a guinea was worth so he went to BP (British Petroleum) office in Anchorage to find out. A logical place to find out about the guinea's monetary value—right? Wrong. Peggy Shaft, right, works for BP in Anchorage. Did she know? No. The reason: BP hires locally wherever they are so Peggy and Gerard have proper puzzled looks on their faces. In a round-about way, they finally found out that a guinea is worth about \$2.50.
—BETZI WOODMAN Photo