

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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'Le Muktuk and A Shake to Go ...'

By FRANK MURPHY

Despite bright August sunshine, there may seem to be a pall of gloom hanging over the community of Fairbanks. With the closing of the Tanana Valley State Fair on Aug. 20, Fairbanksans face many muk-tukless months before this delicacy will again be available to them.

Before the Tundra Times opened its booth at the fair and "gave away" muktuk in exchange for a donation, nobody knew what to expect. The controversy over fitness of native foods for public consumption had one side in the dispute anticipating high "sales" and the other side anticipating a high body count.

Neither side was right, but the FOM (Friends of Muktuk) made quite a few converts to the cause while there were no known fatalities attributable to muktuk eating. If there was one, it should have been this reporter, whose appetite always overwhelmed his caution.

In the course of five days, I consumed almost as much muk-tuk as I gave away but I didn't contract anything more lethal than a greasy chin.

About 320 tiny samples,

skewered on either side of a reassuring olive, were devoured by hungry fair-goers. Reactions were varied. Many, who expected the worse, were pleasantly surprised.

Some compared the taste to nuts, a fishy steak, watermelon rind, or bubble gum; but most proclaimed it wasn't like anything they had ever eaten. A limited number wouldn't say anything, but chewing determinedly and smiling weakly, would back away from the booth, presumably on their way to the nearest trash barrel.

A few teenagers tried to express both wit and worldliness by pausing over a plate of muktuk, wrinkling up their faces, and shouting "Eeeyuk!" Since muktuk is made up of simple bands of black and white, and is visually quite charming, this attitude was unpardonable.

It was pointed out that they had probably eaten clams and liver, certainly not beauty queens of the food world, and furthermore, if it were called "le muktuk" and served at \$10 a portion, they would likely consume it with relish even if it was purple with green bumps and crawling across the plate in a last dash for freedom.

Secretary Rogers Morton Lauds Modern Indian Art

Three major exhibitions of Indian arts now being shown by museums administered by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the Department of the Interior were described today by Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton as "demonstrating the vitality of contemporary contributions to the arts by modern Indian people."

The Southern Plains Indian Museum in Anadarko, Oklahoma, is presenting through September 14 the first historic survey to feature 43 paintings created during the past four decades by 42 outstanding Indian artists of the Southern Plains region.

The Museum of the Plains Indian in Browning, Montana, is exhibiting through September 30 a collection of contemporary paintings by 44 Indian artists of Montana, Wyoming and Idaho, the first extensive exhibition ever assembled of modern works by Indian artists from the three state area.

A collection of 78 contemporary quillworks by 28 Sioux Indian Museum in Rapid City, South Dakota.

This comprehensive exhibition, which will continue through September 30, is the first presentation to document the variety and stature of this rare art form practised by contemporary Sioux craftsmen.

The use of porcupine quills for esthetic purposes is one of the most unique concepts in the arts of the North American Indian, according to Myles Libhart, Director of Museums for the Indian Arts and Crafts Board.

On the final day of the fair, a visitor from Chicago came to the booth and made inquiries as to the best way to prepare and preserve muktuk. He was in touch with a processor of novelty foods and quite sure that this Eskimo delicacy could be sold on a national basis.

So, who knows? In a few years, people may be driving up "stands all over the nation and ordering, "muktuk, with a shake to go, and side order of seal oil."

who coordinated the exhibition. Contemporary Southern Plains Indian Painting is the first exhibition to document the varied development of modern Indian art in the region.

An 80 page catalog has been published in conjunction with the exhibition illustrating the 43 paintings in color along with photos and biographical sketches of the artists.

Priced at \$3.50, the catalog is available from the Oklahoma Indian Arts and Crafts Co-operative, Box 966, Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005, an Indian owned and operated organization.

The exhibition, Contemporary Indian Artists, Montana-Wyoming-Idaho, is the most extensive exhibition ever organized of works by Indian artists who represent 13 tribes in the region.

It reflects participation of the Plains Indians in the contemporary life of the American West. An 80 page catalog, priced at \$3.50 is available from the Tipi Shop, Inc., Box 1270, Rapid City, South Dakota 57701, a non-profit educational organization.

"Interior's interest in the arts begins with programs to recognize and promote Indian arts," Secretary Morton said. "These exhibitions are a striking illustration of the manner in which Indian artists and craftsmen are helping to broaden and enrich contemporary art in the United States."

The exhibitions were organized by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, established by the Congress in 1935.

The Board serves as an informational, promotional and advisory clearinghouse encouraging the development of outstanding contemporary Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut arts.

The Board administers and operates the three Museums which are presenting the exhibitions.

After the current showings, the exhibitions will begin a two-year tour to other museums and galleries throughout the regions served by the Board's Museums.

Joe Upicksoun Joins Board Of NTCA

By MARGIE BUAMAN
(Courtesy of the Anchorage Daily News)

BARROW — Joseph Upicksoun balanced his baby daughter Rachael on his knee, pausing to reflect on his new role in the powerful national tribal chairman's association.

"I have a belief that for the first time all the American Natives are united, from Barrow to Florida," Upicksoun said.

"I also have a belief that the Secretary of the Interior can be caused to sweat," he said, smiling, as he handed Rachael to his wife, Alice.

Upicksoun, president of the outspoken Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, was elected to the board of the National Tribal Chairman's Association during a recent convention at Eugene, Oregon.

He is the second Alaskan to hold one of the 12 board positions in this organization, which has risen to national prominence as a spokesman for tribal councils throughout the United States. The first was Don Wright, president of AFN.

"They are the most powerful native group in the country," allowed Upicksoun. "They know how to use the white man's tools — and that's the law."

"What really tickled me is here Alaska's involved in a powerful organization and we have the tenacity to tell the Interior Secretary what to do," he mused.

A board member is equal to a Bureau of Indian Affairs area director: That is, having the responsibility of guardian of the aboriginal people of his area. The tribal chairmen, however, feel they may succeed where BIA has failed because their objective is to unite every Native American in a leadership position.

All members of the N.T.C.A. must be elected officials and have the option of adopting any resolutions of represented tribal groups. Alaska has 12 votes in the association, one for each regional native corporation. Upicksoun was influential in the convention move to recognize the regional corporations to be on equal footing with tribal councils in other parts of the nation.

"The position I now hold as a board member is not my creation," Upicksoun said. "I was asked to serve and I never decline any of my people asking me to serve. I am proud that the Alaska area saw fit that I should be its representative."

At the next meeting of the NTCA, in Kenosha, Wis. Aug. 28-31, the board will discuss recommendations of various tribal organizations regarding land matters for possible pre-

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Editorial Comment—

'Death by Ounces'

"Death by Ounces" is the title of the 1972 edition of The Travelers Insurance Companies book on highway accident statistics. The 'ounces' are the 80 proof variety.

Consumption of such drinks by motorists in the United States in 1971 caused death for 27,000 men, women and children and injuries for 2,350,000 others, according to statistics in the book.

All studies undertaken so far point up that alcohol taken in any amount immediately before driving impairs the operator's ability to some degree. This has long been recognized in many foreign countries and is reflected in extremely stringent legislation, notably in the Scandinavian nations.

Finland, for instance, jails a person caught driving with any detectable trace of alcohol in his blood. Even with no accident involvement, he faces up to five month's imprisonment. Hard labor is added if the drunk driver injures or kills someone.

We in the United States are a long way from taking such unequivocal stands. Convictions of drunken drivers are extremely difficult to obtain. Of the 350 drunk-driver cases surveyed by The Charlotte (N.C.) News, only two ended in trials. In one, the defendant was found guilty. In the other, the jury could not reach a verdict.

The solution to this dilemma is obvious: There are laws against drunk driving. It's up to each of us to let our law enforcement officials know that we want the laws to work.

LETTERS FROM HERE AND THERE

ALASKA CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
913 West Sixth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

August 7, 1972

Dear Mr. Rock:

To extend our congratulations on your expose of the oil spill situation at the Happy Valley construction camp. It was a true public service to do so; your emphasis on the matter of secretiveness (failure to report and publicize) was surely to the point.

We wish also to congratulate and thank you for your reprinting from the Daily News our column on "Other Voices" — in your July 26 edition. You credited the Daily News; we'd appreciate it if you'd also credit The Alaska Center for the Environment, whose writers author each column. You are welcome to reprint any of our columns — also to reprint from our monthly Northern Light, which is distributed with the Daily News, the second Tuesday of each month. Our sixth issue

will be out on August 8.

Included with this letter is a copy of a presentation made at the Borough's Third Annual Environmental Quality Seminar — a talk which was remarkably well-received by representatives of business and industry not usually receptive to such views. I shall hope that you will find it in some way useful.

Sincerely,

Charles Konigsberg
President

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