

"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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## The Passing of A Great Whaler

"Howard, I'm pretty sick and I'm pretty skinny."

Allen Rock, casually and calmly, said this to his brother over a long distance telephone before his death last week. He even chuckled a bit as he said it. The only sign of his suffering was his breath that was little bit short.

Allen was a man who wasn't easily covered by any situation he had to meet during his life. When his brother saw him in his hospital bed a few days before he passed away, Allen was cheerful and he laughed easily. And this with all his limbs all but paralyzed.

"He was that way all the time. He smiled to the end," said his wife Frances.

Allen Rock was one of the great whalers of his village of Point Hope. Through the skills garnered from his father and his ancestors, he, along with his fellow hunters, caught mammoth bowhead whales that fed their villagers through the years. Tons of this muktuk and meat also found its way to Barrow, Nome, Kotzebue, Kivalina, Noatak and other villages. Generous amounts were also shipped to Fairbanks and Anchorage.

Allen's greatest moment of his whale hunting career came when he caught one on May 24, 1961—a 60 ton animal.

"That one almost got us," he said of himself and his crew.

Allen himself had struck the whale and thought it a one-shot catch.

"It started to turn turtle showing it was dead or dying," Allen recalled. "But all of a sudden, the great flukes sliced out of the water and headed straight for me at the bow of our umiak. They must have missed my head and the bow by about an inch. I felt the great wind swish. They threw water in my eyes with such force that I was blinded for a while."

The whale was subdued presently with the help of other whaling crews. It was the only whale caught that year. The whole village had gotten worried because the season was getting very late. The ice had begun to rot and break up with the warmth of spring. Very soon after the two days and nights of unceasing work cutting up the huge whale, the ice broke up and drifted out.

Allen Rock was a traditionalist as his ancestors were. The burning spirit within him was the whaling tradition and achieving its purpose was his life.

"Howard," he once said, "One of the greatest feelings a hunter can experience is to catch a whale—a big animal. You know then the people will eat."

## Becky Misses Her Eskimo Friends

50 Rue des Galibauds  
73 Albertville, France  
January 8, 1971

My Eskimo Friends,

I think about you alot. Especially since we've left Alaska. In the village (and in Fairbanks) everyone greets you with a smile, never a frown. I've really appreciated your kindness. You're always willing to share. If I met my friend going to the store for candies she'd invite me to go too.

I hope you'll never lose your spirit of sharing. My daddy tells me that your ancestors always shared everything.

I love you all very much, and wish I was in ALASKA with you all again.

Yours sincerely,  
Becky Webster

## UA Arts Festival

'Alaska Native Arts' will be the theme of this Spring's University of Alaska Fine Arts Festival.

"As our contribution to this event the Art Department will host a juried invitational show of the finest Alaskan Native art to open around March 28 at our Fine Arts Gallery here in Fairbanks," according to assistant professor of art Glen C. Simpson.

Simpson and Mr. Ronald Senungetuk will be in charge of amassing and selecting work for the show.

"We are seeking both modern and traditional work in any media," Simpson says. "Our only criteria for inclusion in the show is that the work be executed in the last ten years and that it truly be of Fine Art quality."

First prize winner of the art show will receive two hundred dollars. A one hundred dollar second prize is also being offered.

The art department is presently asking art experts and other knowledgeable people throughout the state for their

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## In Yuk and English— Bilingual Classes Click

COLLEGE, Alaska—In a one-story yellow school building at Nunapitchuk in Southwestern Alaska an inscription in Eskimo designates "The Eskimo Language Room".

Inside, since early last fall, 15 or 16 Eskimo children, not quite ready for the first grade, have been learning a newly developed alphabet for Eskimos speaking the Yuk (YOOK) dialect.

They give visitors dramatized presentations of "Goldilocksaaq Pingayun—Ilu Taqukaat" (Goldilocks and the Three Bears) and enthusiastically sing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" in the same dialect, one of the two most widely spoken by Alaskan Eskimos.

All of these children, as well as some in similar schools of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (B.I.A.) in the lower Kuskokwim River area, come from homes where Eskimo is the first language and English is a foreign tongue.

Two Eskimo teachers handle the Eskimo class work at Nunapitchuk in cooperation with but not constant observation by a white instructor. Pairs of Native teachers work similarly at Akia-chak and Napakiak schools and at Bethel Elementary school, which is operated by the state.

For Marie Nick, one of the Native teachers, this is a memorable switch. For she remembers the day when, as a pupil in the same village, she had to go without lunch as punishment for uttering an Eskimo word on the school ground.

In the same school at Nunapitchuk the beginning Eskimo pupils spend about an hour a day being indoctrinated in English by a Caucasian teacher, Betty Perala. She sings, "Do you know what time is it?" and they pipe the reply, "It's time for English now." During this hour no word of Eskimo

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## Letters from Here and There

511 W. 4th Ave., Suite 1  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
January 14, 1971

Letter to the Editor  
Mr. Howard Rock  
P.O. Box 1287  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Dear Mr. Rock:

In my opinion the Tundra Times is one of the finest newspapers in Alaska. In it news about Native people, political situations, economical and social situations could be in a form where our Native people could read and appreciate a paper such as the Tundra Times.

I have an idea that you may wish to ponder, which I believe would benefit not only our Native people in Rural Alaska, but also every State agency in our state government.

Many of our Native councils in the villages are not familiar with agencies that are available to them in our state government. It would be wonderful if the Tundra Times could, in each issue, interview a different State, Federal, or private agency and let the agency reveal what its program is all about, and how, if in any way, the agency could be of service to our Rural communities.

I believe this would benefit the State as a whole in that it may bring the Native people closer to agencies that are now or will be working within the villages.

Respectfully yours,  
Melvin Charlie

Tununak, Alaska  
January 10, 1971

Senator Mike Gravel  
United States Senate  
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Senator Gravel:

I am Andrew J. Chikoyak, Chief Illustrator of the Linguistics and Foreign Languages Department of the University of Alaska. I met you last fall in Tununak when you were campaigning for Larry Carr. I interpreted for you at the U.S. National Guard Armory.

This letter I am writing is on

behalf of my people on Nelson Island. I have hoped the Village Council would take some sort of an action against the Wien Consolidated Airline in Bethel, but for they are often neutral and tongue-tied, I am writing this letter hoping you would help us.

In the first place, there are about thousand people on Nelson Island. I would say about three fourth of the people are none and elementary educated. Being one and elementary educated, these people do not know a lot of their individual rights under the Constitution of the United States. The Wien Consolidated Airline knows this, and therefore they take an advantage of them. Seeing my people being treated as sheeps, I boil mad!

As you have seen and learn, the three villages on Nelson Island are isolated. The only transportation in the winter time is the air transportation. All our perishable items and other needs are flown in by the Wien Consolidated Airline. The situation, however, does not work out this way. Frequently, our perishable items and other needs are held in Bethel for one, two, three, four months. By the time they are finally flown in, the perishable items are spoiled, the snow machines are scuffed up, damaged and covered with the snow. The Wien Consolidated Airline does not realize that the snow machines are very expensive and other spoiled items as well. What boils me mad is that the Wien Consolidated Airline is a big airline, why can't they build a big warehouse in Bethel in which to keep the perishable items and the other items unspoiled and undamaged? We know the weather situation on the Western Bering Sea Coast. Therefore, we understand whenever they cannot fly on the bad days. What we do not understand is the spoiled items they bring us, as well as the damaged items.

I would like also bring to your attention the importance of the snow machines. I think Wien Consolidated Airline should put top priority on the snow machines. The snow machines are needed by the men in the

villages to use to provide their families with food. The men in the villages need these machines much more than they need the catalogs and advertisements.

There is something I would like to know: Every time the mail and the freight comes in, the postmaster signs the air bills whether the freight items are damaged or not. Are not the freight owners suppose to sign the air bills after they have checked their freight? Let me know on this matter right away.

Please give this letter your immediate attention. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Andrew J. Chikoyak

1544 Charon Road  
Jacksonville, Florida  
32205  
December 29, 1970

Dear Sir:

Would like you to know how much I have been enjoying reading your newspaper every week, even reading the advertisements. Down here in Florida we probably don't know too much about your state, for instance, I had never before realized there were three native groups: the Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts.

However, about six months ago I viewed on TV several interesting programs about Alaska, its economics and its future. I wrote the Governor (knowing he would refer it to the proper department), advising him I had seen native-made carved bracelets and moccasins, and why weren't such articles available for sale here, instead of our buying so much from Haiti, Czechoslovakia, Japan, etc. The proper department answered that this industry was not yet fully developed and even Alaska gift shops had difficulty in getting such supplies; that when more artifacts were made they would seek markets in the states. It is hoped that in time we here can procure these beautiful objects in our stores.

I close with best wishes.

Alice Cribbs