

Sharing Our Pathways

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A newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative
Alaska Federation of Natives ♦ University of Alaska ♦ National Science Foundation ♦ Annenberg Rural Challenge



Elders at an AKRSI meeting, l to r: Clarence Irrigoo, St. Lawrence Island Yup'ik; Rachel Craig, Iñupiaq; and Effie Kokrine, Koyukon Athabaskan.

Recognizing Our Elders

by Frank Hill

One of the greatest strengths of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative and Annenberg Rural Challenge is the reliance we place on the wisdom of Native Elders. It is their knowledge, wisdom, patience, humility, and humor that we depend upon to verify what we do. As we near the end of our third year of the project, we need to make sure that we thank the Native Elders for contributing so much to the success of the project.

We appreciate their patience as we attempt to learn what they are teaching us and allowing their knowledge to be shared with others. A common

trait all Native Elders share is their good humor. With their humor they teach us not to take ourselves too seriously and not let our egos get in

the way of what we should be doing.

Native Elders continually remind us that we cannot separate the understanding of natural phenomena from the deeper knowledge that we are all spiritually connected to the earth and earth's creatures. Western knowledge systems validate their work by relying upon the study of behaviors and phenomena by experts with long experience in research and practice. Most of these experts are recognized by the Western system of awarding advanced academic degrees such as doctorates in science and philosophy. Alaska Native Elders represent the same level of expertise for the Native Knowledge System—they are our “doctors” of science and philosophy.

As the project progresses through the next few years, we must ensure that Native Elders continue to be the base of knowledge upon which we continue our work. ✖

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Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative

Ray Barnhardt, Co-Director

University of Alaska Fairbanks
ANKN/AKRSI
PO Box 756730
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6730
(907) 474-1902 phone
(907) 474-1957 fax
email: ffrjb@uaf.edu

Oscar Kawagley, Co-Director

University of Alaska Fairbanks
ANKN/AKRSI
PO Box 756730
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6730
(907) 474-5403 phone
(907) 474-5208 fax
email: rfok@uaf.edu

Frank Hill, Co-Director

Alaska Federation of Natives
1577 C Street, Suite 300
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 274-3611 phone
(907) 276-7989 fax
email: fnfwh@uaf.edu

Transforming the Culture of Schools: Yup'ik Eskimo Examples

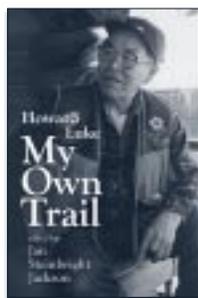
by Jerry Lipka, Gerald Mohatt, and the Ciulistet Group

We would like to announce the recent publication of a ground-breaking book that addresses many of the issues at the heart of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative and rural schools throughout Alaska. The title of the book is *Transforming the Culture of Schools: Yup'ik Eskimo Examples*. It was prepared by Jerry Lipka in collaboration with Gerald Mohatt at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the Ciulistet group of Yup'ik teachers from the Bristol Bay region. Some of the Yup'ik teachers who helped co-author chapters include Nancy Sharp, Fannie Parker, Vicki Dull, and Evelyn Yanez, with further contributions from people like Anecia Lomack, Esther Ilutsik, Dora Cline, Ina Bouker William Gumlickpuk, and Sharon Nelson-Barber. In addition, numerous Elders from the region were major contribu-

tors to the work, such as Henry Alakayak, Joshua Philip, Annie Blue, and Charlie Chocknok. Many of these people continue to be involved with an ongoing NSF-funded project led by Dr. Lipka and aimed at developing Yup'ik math curriculum modules.

The book presents the results of over 15 years of collaborative research effort in looking at classroom instructional practices and experimenting with new forms of curriculum that are grounded in Yup'ik cultural beliefs and practices. In addition to attracting a general readership among practicing educators, it is a book

that should become a valuable reference for teacher preparation programs throughout Alaska and beyond. It may be ordered from Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 10 Industrial Avenue, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430 (ISBN 0-8058-2821-4). ✨



Howard Luke: My Own Trail

In this book, Howard tells his story of early childhood experiences, the influence his mother had upon him, and people and events that shaped his adult life as well as his vision for a bright future.

While this book is enjoyable reading for everyone, it is a valuable resource for people who consider the Tanana Valley their home. Through Howard Luke's eyes and words we see the land and the people who in-

habit it in the context of a personal history that is in some ways unique, while in others, universal. He offers us an opportunity to gain a deeper sense of meaning of this place to the people for whom it is home, not by choice but by birthright.

Howard Luke: My Own Trail comes with a foldout 18" x 24" map of the area between Fairbanks and Nenana that Howard calls home. It can be ordered from the Alaska Native Knowledge Network. Contact Dixie Dayo at 474-5086, fax 474-5208, email fndmd1@uaf.edu for information. ✨

Sharing Our Pathways

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The Alaska Native Knowledge Network
University of Alaska Fairbanks
Harper Building
P.O. Box 756730
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6730
(907) 474-5086 phone
(907) 474-5208 fax
<http://www.uaf.edu/ankn>
email: fyankn@uaf.edu

Newsletter Editor: Lolly Carpluk
filmc@uaf.edu
Layout & Design: Paula Elmes
fnpse@uaf.edu

Linking Indigenous and Western Knowledge Systems in Education

by Ray Barnhardt

On September 22–23, AKRSI brought together a group of scientists, Native educators, and members of the Alaska Native Science Education Coalition, along with AKRSI staff, to participate in a colloquium on “Linking Indigenous and Western Knowledge Systems in Education.” The purpose of the colloquium was to take stock of current thinking regarding the interface between indigenous and Western knowledge systems as they are brought together in schools, particularly in the areas of science and mathematics. The Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative has been experimenting with various approaches to integrating Indigenous knowledge into the formal education system over the past three years, and while this has led to some very promising and innovative initiatives, it has also raised a lot of complex issues and challenging questions regarding the implications of bringing two very different knowledge systems together under one roof.

We began the colloquium with presentations and discussion regarding the experiences gained from several of the Elders’ academies and science camps that were held around the state this past summer and fall.

Reports were presented on the Old Minto Cultural Camp, the AINE Academy of Elders, the ANSWER Camp in Galena, the AISES Science Camps in Fairbanks and Afognak, Camp WATER in Southeast Alaska, Camp

Qungaayuḡ in Unalaska, and the Alakanuk Cultural Camp that had just been completed the previous week. All of these camps and academies brought together Elders, students, and teachers in various camp settings to focus on learning aspects of both Indigenous and Western knowledge.

The presentations set the stage for a more extensive discussion the next day around the reactions of the participants to various issues raised by the camp experiences, with the intent being to develop guidelines for schools on how to get the most educational value out of traditional camps as learning environments. Alan Dick is now preparing a draft Science Camp Handbook, which will be distributed in draft form for review and feedback, and then published for general distribution to schools throughout the state. A copy will also be posted for access on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network website at:

<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu>.

We also invited those colloquium participants who could stay on for another day to join an on-going working group that Peggy Cowan has been convening to develop culturally appropriate measures for determining how well students at various levels have learned the knowledge and skills associated with the Alaska Science Content Standards. The results of this work will be made available to schools by the Alaska Department of Education as part of the state’s Quality Schools Initiative.

We wish to express our appreciation to all the people who helped organize and participated in the colloquium. It was a mind-stretching exercise from which we will all benefit. ✘

Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative and Annenberg Rural Challenge 1999 Initiatives

Aleut/Alutiiq Region

Native Ways of Knowing and Teaching
ANCSA & Subsistence Economy

Athabaskan Region

Culturally Aligned Curriculum
Language/Cultural Immersion Camps

Iñupiaq Region

Indigenous Science Knowledge Base
Oral Tradition as Education

Southeast Region

Village Science Applications
Living in Place

Yup’ik Region

Elders & Cultural Camps
Reclaiming Tribal Histories

Alaska Native Knowledge Network, continuing

An Alliance Between Humans and Creatures

by Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley,

Paper presented to the International Circumpolar Arctic Social Scientists conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, June 1998. Part I is printed here, part II will be printed in the next issue of Sharing Our Pathways.

Basic philosophical questions are raised in the course of observing and questioning people with respect to notions of inquiry, explanation, technology, science and religion as they relate to particular lifeways. Accordingly, world view as discussed here will attempt to answer the questions deftly set out by Barry Lopez. Lopez refers to “metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics and logic—which pose, in order, the following questions. What is real? What can we understand? How should we behave? What is beautiful? What are the patterns we can rely upon?” (1986:202). Added to the above list will be “ontology:” Why are we? Is there something greater than the human? Lopez goes on to point out, “The risk we take is of finding our final authority in the metaphors rather than in the land. To inquire into the intricacies of a distant landscape, then, provokes thoughts about one’s own interior landscape, and the familiar landscapes of memory. The land urges us to come around to an understanding of ourselves” (247).

The concept of “worldview” is very closely related to the definitions of culture and cognitive map (Berger, Berger, & Kellner 1974:148). A worldview consists of the principles we acquire to make sense of the world around us. These principles, including values, traditions and customs are learned by youngsters from myths, legends, stories, family, community and examples set by community leaders (Deloria, 1991, Hardwick, 1991). The worldview, or cognitive map, is a summation of coping devices which have worked in the past, and may or may not be as effective in the present

(Netting, 1986). Once a worldview has been formed, the people are then able to identify themselves as a unique people. Thus, the worldview enables its possessors to make sense of the world around them, make artifacts to fit their world, generate behavior and interpret their experiences. As with many other indigenous groups, the worldviews of the traditional Alaska Native peoples have worked well for their practitioners for thousands of years (Kawagley, 1995).

Native ways of knowing imply action, states of knowing that entail constant flux of doing. The universe

and Mother Earth are constantly changing. If we are looking at and trying to make sense of the world in which we live, we must speak of it as an active process. So our Alaska Native words describe pieces of activity (Roszak, Gomes, & Kanner, 1992). The Native words are sound symbols garnered from nature which then lend themselves to reality defining itself. The English words used to describe nature merely define nature and supplant reality. The scientific objectivity allows looking at “things” in nature and then as commodities to be used and exploited without regard to its habitat and niche in the ecological system. The institutions of higher learning teach us to look at “things” for in-depth detailed knowledge in a fragmentary approach. It allows us to develop technology to hasten our extraction of minerals, deforestation and agriculture. We are not mindful of the carrying capacity of the land and its ability to regenerate. Our affluence as industrial nations is merely a borrowed affluence. Borrowed from countries like Ghana, Philippines, Columbia, China, and India to name a few. Our technological prowess and its concomitant concepts of growth and development and that the “whole is the sum of its parts” (Mills, 1997) has brought us to the brink of disaster. I quote the following poem from Elisabeth Hermodsson (Mills, 1997):

once upon a time

*we were to be pitied
we were in mortal fear
we believed in spirits, gnomes
god and other kinds of superstition
now we feel safe for we know
everything
control everything
we have rational explanations
for everything
we make use of matter’s minutest
particle
for our purposes*

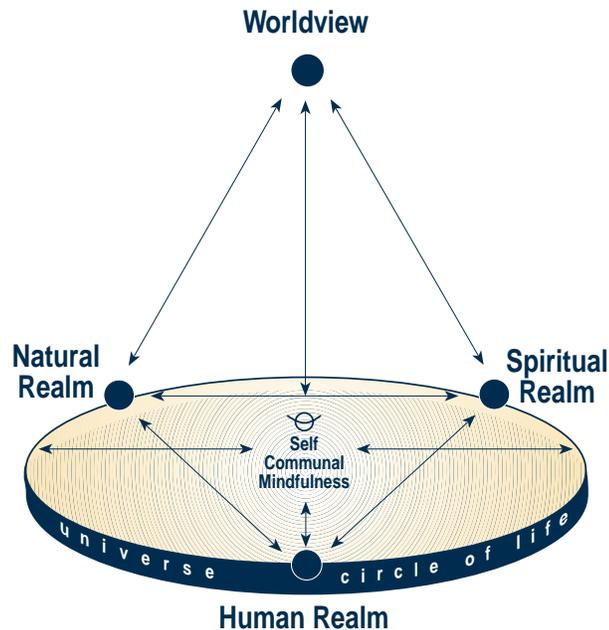
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*and we are much to be pitied
more than ever before
never has space been closer
never has responsibility been greater
never have we known more fear
and we do not believe in good or evil
powers
nor in gods and other superstitions
we believe in ourselves
and never has space been wider
and never have we had greater power
and never have we been more
powerless
we believe in progress
and never has catastrophe been so
close*

We certainly have a totalitarian and dehumanizing technological system. And most certainly, as a Native people, we have been unable to evaluate our satisfaction with the technological gadgets and tools that have been given or forced upon us by this all consuming giant. Its technocratic society questions the maintenance of our Native languages, subsistence, ways of knowing and Native rights to an education befitting our worldviews. But it espouses, through lip service and pronouncements, multiculturalism that many of its members deem evil. I don't remember the source of the following quote but: "Too much think about white man, no more can find dream." We have become aware of the materialistic and scientific sophistry with its inherent ability to obfuscate who we are, what we are and where we are going. After this vitriolic attack, I now get to the subject of my talk.

I have enclosed a diagram which I call the tetrahedral metaphor of the Native worldview. I have drawn a circle representing the universe or circle of life. The circle represents togetherness which has no beginning and no end. On this circle are represented the human, natural and spiritual worlds. There are two-way arrows between them as well as to the worldview at the apex of the tetrahe-



dral. These two-way arrows depict communications between all these functions to maintain balance. The Yupiat say "*Yuluni pitalkertugluni*," "Living a life that feels just right." One has to be in constant communication with each of the processes to know that one is in balance. If the feeling is that something is wrong then one must be able to check to see what might be the cause for unease or disease. If the feeling of being just right comes instinctively and this feeling permeates your whole being, then you have attained balance. This means that one does not question the other functions intellectually, but that one merges spiritually and emotionally with the others. The circle brings all into one mind. In the Yupiat thought world, everything of Mother Earth possesses a spirit. This spirit is consciousness, an awareness. So the wind, river, rabbit, amoeba, star, lily, and so forth possess a spirit.

Thus, if all possess a spirit or soul, then all possess consciousness and the power that it gives to its physical counterpart. It allows the Native person the ability to have the aid of the spirit to do extraordinary feats of righting unbalanced individual psyche, community disease or loss of

communication with the spiritual and natural world through irreverence toward beings of Nature. Harry Robinson (Robinson, 1992) calls this "'nature power,' the life-sustaining spirituality." Dr. Grof refers to "power animals" (Grof, 1993) which gives its possessor the power to "communicate with them, adopting aspects of their wisdom or power and re-establishing links with them when the connection has been lost through negligence or lack of reverence, or by offending either the animal spirits or one of the greater spirits of the natural world." These are not available through Western scientific research methods but through the ancient art of shamanism. From this you can see that when we rely on Western means of research only, it is a limiting factor, and this is what our institutions of higher learning teach. All areas of social and scientific research teach only one way of trying to learn and understand phenomena. Our technological and scientific training imprison the students' minds only to its understandings, much to the detriment of the learners who enter the mainstream Western world to become its unerring members of progress and development. ✨

(to be continued in the next issue of SOP)

Iñupiaq Region

Keynote Address: To the North Slope Iñupiat Educators' Association Quarterly Membership Meeting, April 24, 1998

On behalf of the North Slope Iñupiat Education Association, welcome everyone. I would address what I say to everyone who is with the educational system of today, and that means everyone!

First, I would like to greet all the Iñupiaq language teachers wherever they may be, and encourage them to keep it up. You are very important to us to be leaders of our classrooms. Natives of today are experiencing difficulties concerning our Iñupiaq language, it being the very essence of our Iñupiaq cultural heritage. We claim it as our own and it needs to be utilized at home, school, churches, and at play. We have learned from experience 60 years ago that the Native students were intelligent enough to learn the hardest language in the world to master. But can you imagine how much better it would have been for everyone if those students were allowed to speak their language at home?

One thing for sure is the fact that we need to support our present Iñupiaq language teachers. I know we do, but we all need more action to help them to press on more, and replace anyone retiring as soon as they are out. We need to make a combined effort for our leaders and support our bilingual programs within the North Slope Borough School District. As parents, school boards, school advisory committee members and English language teachers, all of us need to have one voice to protect our language at all costs.

Today almost all of us, here and there, are involved to make education better for our students and we acknowledge the fact that a child's in-

telligence is not limited to one language. Parents are learning back their mother tongue with their children. Anyone can become literate in their own language as well as in English, if they are really determined to do so; we've seen proof here in Barrow. We may think it's too late for some—maybe so—but it sure does not hurt to try and try again and again. We should encourage our students to be fluent in two languages. Would it not be wonderful to start speaking in Iñupiaq with that beloved grandmother, who is making every effort to speak to you in her sometimes misunderstood conversations with her grandchildren?

The North Slope Borough School District (NSBSD) finally found a way to improve the bilingualism through immersion, but we are watching it teetering because others do not feel our Native language is that important. If we do not do anything and just lay around and watch, what will happen? If we do not fight the never-ending battle, in fact, we may be too late to protect the birthright that our forefathers passed on to us. We have to seek help from all sources and even from our other Alaska Native speakers. We have to seek help from our degreed teachers, lawyers, governments and churches to help us.

We also have to educate the outside world on how crucial it is to keep alive our way of life. This is the time

by Martha Aiken

to forgive and forget the wrongs of others so they may help us in this important effort, because not everyone is perfect and we will need their wisdom.

The language we have been trying to revive for the last 20 years or so is having problems as it is. It scares me like heck when legislative bills start appearing concerning our language, especially about having only the English language to teach in schools. There are other legislative bills that we need the public to understand, because even our own Alaskan neighbors are hinting that bilingualism is just a waste of money. **And here it is the very heartbeat of most Alaska Natives.** The language we are trying hard to revive for the last 20 years or so will start crumbling unless we make every effort to protect it.

But the most important fact we seriously need to ask our school board to do is to employ more fluent speakers to be teacher aides and become Iñupiat teachers. Entice the speakers to join Iñupiat teachers because they sure need help.

The school district has to attract more bilingual teachers and aides even if they have to pay them a little more than most employees. We know for a fact that the teacher's aides can take over a certified teacher's classroom, but an Iñupiaq teacher's classroom cannot be taken over by a degreed doctor, unless an Iñupiaq aide helps him or her.

Again I encourage everyone to become involved in encouraging young people to keep on keeping on. There are young adults out there. We

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know we need them desperately to teach our eager-to-learn bilingual students. How many times have your young ones begged you to speak to them only in Iñupiaq? We need to help them learn back their language, and not get mad when some laugh at them. Do not let them forget it was difficult to try to start speaking English too. We, the little Eskimos back 60 years ago, had problems too, as I recall. But we laughed about each other and helped each other to resolve the important situation at that time. Even our peers told on us so we had to suffer the consequences, but we never gave up. English educators say that the English language is the hardest to master, but not for the little Iñupiat. I say there were smart ones and dummies like me—I barely made it to the game activity parties held for the students that did not say ten Iñupiaq words. That was hard for me but my determination pulled me through as did others.

Today tables are turned and I want to encourage all the little Iñupiat or Tanik: you can learn to speak our language if you really want to.

Lastly, I want to thank the present efforts the school teachers have done for our North Slope Borough School

District. Your love for teaching is more valuable than any effort in life. Sometimes you feel “Is it worth it?” It is; you will see enough in just a few years from now when you retire. But right now you have to evaluate the way you teach your students because they are not all little angels. They will remember how you had been when you were their teacher. Seek help from parents when your students are getting out of hand. Don’t just listen one-sided ways; recognize those little tykes who are having a difficult time understanding that certain little problem. Once they learn to do it, their appreciation will have a great impact between you and that not-so-smart student.

This last comment includes everyone from the certified teachers and aides, to the principals, school board and parents. If you feel you have to leave our schools, do it with pride for all your contributions and involvement with the students, difficult as they may be. *Help us help our bilingual programs of today. Share with us what you feel instead of keeping it in yourself. We may be able to help you if you come halfway to meet us. Thank you and may God bless!*

I leave you with a poem given to me by a friend:

Prayer for Teachers

Lord, thank you for teachers that have:

WISDOM

To teach principles as well as facts;

COURAGE

To stand firm when challenged by parent or child;

PERSISTENCE

To teach again and again, then again;

VISION

To know what results will show far down the years;

LOVE

For the unlovable as well as the lovely child;

PATIENCE

Lord, patience, forever and unending.

—Author Unknown ✨

Iñupiaq Education Conference Coming in November

The North Slope Iñupiat Educators’ Association announces the Iñupiaq Education Conference November 18–19, 1998 in the North Slope Iñupiat Heritage Center in Barrow, Alaska.

The theme of the conference is “Realizing the Vision for Iñupiaq Education,” focusing on the vision set forth by the North Slope Borough’s first mayor, the late Honorable Eben Hopson, Sr. The conference is sponsored by NSIEA, Ilisagvik College, NSBSD, and the NSB IHLC Commission. Workshops and presentations will be on culturally responsive schools, teacher preparation, recruitment efforts for prospective teachers, Iñupiaq language immersion, curriculum development, technology and the Iñupiaq language, and Iñupiat language initiatives.

For information contact:

Kathy Ahgeak
Ilisagvik College
P.O. Box 749
Barrow, Alaska 99723
Phone: (907) 852-1720
Internet:
kahgeak@co.north-slope.ak.us ✨

Southeast Region: Reading Poles

The following article originally appeared in Raven's Bones Journal, Vol. 5, No. 1, Nov. 1996.

by Andy Hope

The Tlingit occupy the northeastern Pacific coast of Alaska, the northern part of a region commonly referred to as the Northwest Coast (of the North American continent), which reaches from Yakutat, Alaska to the mouth of the Columbia River. Because many of the tribes that inhabit this culture area are related in one way or another, I refer to the Northwest Coast as the Raven Creator Bioregion. The Tlingit are one of many aboriginal groups in this bioregion that continue the tradition of pole carving.

To appreciate Tlingit pole art, one must understand Tlingit social organization: what Frederica de Laguna refers to as “. . . the fundamental principles of . . . clan organization, . . . the values on which Native societies are based,” that is, the names and histories of the respective Tlingit tribes, clans, and clan houses.

The seventy-plus Tlingit clans are separated into moieties or two equal sides—the Wolf and the Raven. Tlingit custom provides for matrilineal descent (one follows the clan of the mother) and requires one to marry one of the opposite moiety. The clans are further subdivided into some 250 clan houses.

To underscore the duality of Tlingit law, Wolf moiety clans generally claim predator crests, whereas Raven moiety clans generally claim non-predator crests. For example, the Kaagwaantaan, a Wolf moiety clan, claim Brown Bear, the Killer Whale, the Shark and the Wolf as crests. The Kiks.ádi, a Raven moiety clan, claim the Frog, the Sculpin, the Dog Salmon and the Raven as crests. Tlingit totem art is utilitarian as opposed to decorative art. Tlingit pole art depicts clan crests and histories.

With the introduction of steel and iron implements among the tribes of the Northwest Coast, totem poles became

numerous. Numbers of them could be seen in the more southern villages. But before modern tools, it is said, Totem poles were rare, not only on account of the difficulty in making—as stone and wood were used for tools—but the desire to keep them strictly distinctive as a reason for the scarcity. One often hears it said by the older people that originally totem poles were used inside of houses only, to support the huge roof beams. The carvings and painting on them were usually those of family crests. Those posts were regarded with respect very much as a flag is by a nation. Even when the Chilkats had acquired modern tools with which to make totem poles they did not fill their villages with tall poles like some other tribes, chiefly because they wanted to keep to the original idea.

The figures seen on a totem pole are the principle subjects taken from traditional treating of the family's rise to prominence or of the heroic exploits of one of its members. From such subjects crests are derived. In some houses, in the rear between the two carved posts, a screen is fitted, forming a kind of partition which is always carved and painted. Behind this screen is the chief's sleeping place.

—Louis Shotridge
The Museum Journal, 1913
Archaeological field work has

shown that the Northwest Coast decorative art form originated approximately 3,000 to 3,500 years before present, with appearance of decorated tools. In early seventies, a bentwood burial box was illegally taken from a cave at the west arm of Port Malmesbury on the west central part of Kuiu Island in central southeast Alaska. The US Forest Service eventually recovered the box and turned it over to the Alaska State Museum in the early 80s.

The box is of sacred significance, since it is associated with a burial. It is decorated on all four sides, with a killer whale form on one side and a half human, half bird (with a humanoid head) figure on two sides. The box was radio carbon dated in 1992 at 780 years before present, plus or minus 80 years, which makes it the oldest example of true northwest coast formline art.

The Port Malmesbury burial box discovery establishes that northwest coast formline existed well before contact with Europeans and was established well before metal tools were available. Some anthropologists had theorized that northwest coast formline was only established after exposure to metal tools brought by Europeans.

What is significant in terms of art that the cultural pattern appears to be coalescing during this initial period. Symbolic modes of graphic expression have not emerged. Certainly to judge from available archaeological evidence, a distinctive coastal style did not begin to crystallize until about 1500 BC. We can only infer that the accumulation of historical and mythological traditions by the corporate lineages of northern coast villages was approaching the
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threshold where graphic symbols of corporate identity became meaningful. Implicit here is the assumption that graphic symbolism expressed in art works, requires a base of shared cognitive modes, belief systems, etc., which must develop to a certain point, perhaps over several millennia, before it can be meaningfully expressed in art works.

—George MacDonald
Indian Art Traditions of the
Northwest Coast

Types of Poles

Mortuary

These poles usually depict one figure, the main clan crest of the deceased. The ashes of the deceased clan member being memorialized by the pole are traditionally placed at the base of the back of the pole.

The Raven Mortuary pole comes from the Prince of Wales Island in southern southeast Alaska. It was moved to the Sitka National Historical Park at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries .

Crest or history of poles

These poles have multiple figures, representing clan crests and symbols depicting clan history. This type of pole is prevalent in southern southeast Alaska southward along the British Colombian coast to Puget Sound, where the Douglas Fir and Red Cedar trees necessary for carving large poles are more accessible.

Raven Memorial Pole

These poles are read from the top figure down. The Kiks.ádi clan of the Raven moiety. A replica of the pole stands in Totem Park in downtown Wrangell, Alaska.

House Poles

House poles are usually six to eight feet tall and usually have one clan crest figure, and are placed in the corners of the clan house.

Screens

House screens depict clan crest symbols. They are usually wall size and are placed at the back wall of clan houses, though in some cases a smaller screen is placed at the front entrance of the clan house.

The Kiks.ádi Naas Shagi Yéil (Raven Creator) pole from Wrangell, Alaska

“The topmost figure is that of Naas Shagi Yéil and the highest of the Tlingit mythological beings that lives on a mountain about the headwaters of the Nass River. He is seated on the day box containing the sun, moon and stars in the front of which is carved and painted to represent the mythical sea spirit, Gunakadeit. Below this is Yéil, the Raven creator, who changed himself into a hemlock needle and was swallowed by the daughter of the guardian of light, which resulted in the rebirth of the raven child who stole the sun, moon and stars to prepare the earth for man, whom he later created. The female figure, indicated by the labret in the lower lip, is the mother who was carried up to the sky to escape the flood caused by the jealous uncle, to be pierced with his bill to sustain him until the waters subsided. The next figure below, which in the form of a raven, was named by informer as Ch’et (murrelet) on the back of which the Raven tell, when dropping from the sky, and which carried him and the mother safely ashore. The female figure with the large labret through the lower lip at the base is “Old woman underneath,” who, seated on a post, supports the earth. In her hands she carries a club for protection against the enemies of mankind who would drag her away, thus destroying the world. In the dualistic creed of the Tlingit, all nature has two existing and opposing forces which beset one on every hand.”

—George Emmons
*The History of Tlingit
Tribes and Clans, n.d.* ✨

Illustration by Joanne George

This pole is on display at the Sitka National Historical Park.

Raven is portrayed on this memorial column, distinguished by his rather large, slightly hooked beak. The carving is in the style and is believed to have come from the village of the Takjikaan on Prince of Wales Island.

In Sitka, the Tlingit placed their memorial poles on the ridge behind their village (along present-day Katlian Street) overlooking the channel.

Memorial poles, along with house posts, are among the oldest forms of totem poles.



Illustration by Mike Jackson

Kiks.ádi Naas Shagi Yéil (Raven Creator) pole from Wrangell, Alaska



Illustration by Joanne George

The house poles illustrated above right come from the SheeAtiká Kwáan Tlingit Tribe. They are owned by the Kaagwaantann clan of the Wolf moiety. They come from Gooch Hit. The poles are housed at the Sitka National Park in Sitka, Alaska.



Illustration drawn by Harold Jacobs

The screen above is from the Huna Kaawu Kwáan Tlingit tribe. It is owned by T'akdeintaan, clan of the Raven moiety. It comes from Yéil Koot Hit (Raven's Nest House). It is said to represent the man who guided boats into the entrance of Lituya Bay. The screen is housed at Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, Alaska.



Students work on fur seal skin projects at Camp Qungaayuḡ, August 1998.

Aleut Region

by Leona Kitchens

The Aleut region has had a very successful year. The focus for the Aleut region this year has been “Village Science Applications and Careers” and “Living in Place.” American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) has been the driving force for the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative’s “Village Science Applications and Careers” initiative. This region’s Annenberg Rural Challenge focus, “Living in Place,” was implemented by the Unalaska City School, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc., and the Qawalangin Tribal Council through a culture camp held on Humpy Cove.

For the village science initiative, the St. Paul and St. George schools held an AISES science camp in St. George followed with a regional AISES science fair. The Pribilof Islands Stewardship camps included AISES activities in their summer camp programs. Students on St. Paul did research on seal entanglement and halibut stomach contents during the summer. St. Paul students visited St. George in October. During the time students were in St. George they worked on projects that included tanning fur seal hides. The focus of the Pribilof

Islands AISES science fair is the local environment and the traditional ways of the people. This fits in well with the Islands’ stewardship programs, with their emphasis on the science and tradition of the Pribilofs. Students in the St. George camp worked on seal throat baskets, grass baskets, paper-making using recycled paper and local vegetation, and preparing fur seal hides for drum making. They continued their study of seabirds and fur seals. The St. Paul camp continued to work on entanglement and traditional ways of living. (Written with help

from Betty Taylor from St. George.)

The “Living in Place” initiative was the focus for Camp Qungaayuḡ that the Unalaska City School held in cooperation with APLA and the Qawalangin Tribal Council. Moses Dirks is currently working with students to incorporate the interviews about living in the Unalaska area onto the CD-ROM that contains interviews of Elders from the region. The contents of the CD-ROM are available on the web. If you would like to see them, give me a call at (907) 581-5472 or e-mail me at snowbank@arctic.net for the password. Again, we would like to thank everyone who helped to make the camp a success, especially those Elders who took the time and energy to teach our children their traditional heritage.

The Association of Unangan/s Educators formed an interim committee to work toward the adoption of a mission statement, goals, and bylaws for the organization. Several audio conferences have been held to begin the formalization of the teachers’ association. The organization plans to meet during the Native Educators’ Conference this January/February. Best of luck to this group of wonderful people who are so important in bridging the gap between our Elders and the children in our school system.

Teachers from the Unalaska City School have begun to write a unit that focuses on this region’s cultural heritage. Moses Dirks, Kari Brown-Herbst, Mike Duhan, and Tony Baylinson are working on a comprehensive unit about sea mammals. This unit-building team is part of a statewide effort to incorporate Native knowledge with Western science in the curriculum. The unit-building teams across the state are supported by Alaska School Districts, Alaska Department of Education, and the Eisenhower Math & Science Education Program.

Wishing all of you happy holidays and looking forward to the coming new year, Leona Kitchens. ✨

Alutiiq Region

by Teri Schneider

Some people call the beach at Katenai a great place to stop for a break on their way to the fishing grounds at Litnik; others call it a great archeological site. The meaning of the word *Katenai* actually means “being at *Qat’at*,” though the word *Qat’at* has lost its literal translations among local Elders. Perhaps it refers to the mountain that lies behind what used to be an old village site, or to the series of rocks that lie in front of the beach. No matter what it used to be called, there is no doubt that Alutiiq people of today think of it as a place where great things happen!

In cooperation with the Kodiak Area Native Association, Afognak Native Corporation, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, the Kodiak Island Borough School District hosted the Second Annual Academy of Elders Cultural Camp in conjunction with the First Annual AISES Science Camp. Once again this event was held at Katenai on Afognak Island.

During two six-day camps, held July 26–August 8, a total of 74 Elders, teachers, students, community members, as well as “Dig Afognak” staff and other observers, participated in

“This camp was the most rewarding thing I’ve been involved in in many years, surely above and beyond anything I expected.”

—Otto C. Mahle
Alutiiq community member

various activities including talking circles, Alutiiq dance/singing, language classes, scientific inquiry, swimming, beachcombing, and lots of eating! The only schedule that we had was that of our cooks, Mary and Sven Haakanson, Sr.: breakfast, lunch, and dinner! The agenda was simple: bring together Alutiiq Elders, youth, and other community members, includ-

ing Native educators, at a location that “had everything” and learning and good things would happen. Actually, GREAT things happened!

“I learned from the youth—their willingness to share their thoughts during the talking circles. Their inquisitive minds and the knowledge they’re gaining in their young years—they will have much to pass on to others as they grow and mature. They have opportunities which weren’t available to . . . my generation.”

—Martha Randolph
Alutiiq community member

With the help and guidance of Alan Dick, I gathered materials to take to camp, in case of rain or “bored” students . . . neither occurred! Students were extremely resourceful, gathering most of their needed materials from the beach, or not far from it. Instead of using the wood I brought in boxes, “just in case,” Sven Haakanson, Jr. and Dennis Knagin shared their skills of identifying and collecting the various driftwood that comes ashore at Catcher Beach. By the end of the first camp, most everyone had begun a carving project. Traditional bows were carved from yellow cedar, mod-

“Being a small part of encouraging and teaching our youth the importance (of) investigating our past can only enhance our future. The more exposure I get to this way of thinking and remembering instills pride and determination in achieving my own goals.”

—Susan Malutin
Alutiiq artist/community member

els of boats immersed from chunks of red cedar, and faces began to appear on the bark of cottonwood.

Students were asked to come with a question regarding their environment, Native culture, or history. During camp we helped the students to focus on their question and formulate a science project. For some children this meant testing various bait with squirrels, eventually leading to a feast of squirrel stew. Others spent most of their time exploring the tidepools and formulating hypothesis regarding animal behavior and habitat, while a small group worked with the insulating qualities of the various furs still used in our area. Still others explored the various qualities of driftwood, testing samples in the smokehouse, in the fire pit, and as floats.

Three visitors from Alutiiq villages on the Kenai Peninsula were able to attend: Sperry Ash, Lydia Robart, and Feona Sawden. Each carried with them a gift that they generously shared. Martha Randolph, a Kodiak community member, expressed that their contributions “expanded our knowledge and awareness of our heritage and language.” An open invitation will always be theirs, and to other Sugpiaq/Alutiiq, as we plan for future camps.

Next year’s plans are being made to continue the science focus, but also include more opportunities for language and curriculum development. Interested Alutiiq should contact Teri Schneider at 486-9031, 486-2455 or e-mail ttschneider@kodiak.alaska.edu ✨

Yup'ik Region

Elder Highlight: Atsaruaq Louise Tall

by Barbara Liu

The Y/Cup'ik region Elder I have chosen to highlight this issue is Atsaruaq Louise Tall. She was born into a Cup'ik family in the vicinity of Chevak in early spring at Issurituulik. Her estimated age is 79. She married young to Ayagaraq in Qissunaq and had five children. Her second marriage was to Quliyuilnguq from Naparyaaq now, Hooper Bay, and they had seven children and adopted one boy.

She's able to recall and share many stories of which she often gives credit to her deceased mother and grandmothers. Atsaruaq's mother was Kaviaq/Cimiralria whose mother was Nanugaq and father, Paanertulria. Atsaruaq's father was Nassiryuaq whose mother was Atsaruaq and father was Usugan—all from Qissunaq, near Chevak.

Within the past few years she's been the most active through her storytelling and is always willing to travel on AKRSI-related activities. Whenever she participates, she seems comfortable and willing to tell stories. She also spends some of her time selling her art of precious handmade dolls that portray her experiences.

She has simple faith with no remorse and seems hardworking for her great-grandchildren. She likes to laugh and makes you feel at home by her kindness. In a few short years, I've gained a grandmother I never had growing up. She's filled many hearts through her example and by giving stories, believing when she dies that her stories will live on. Her memory of unrecorded history is phenomenal. She sews for her family but her favorite pastime is making Yuguat (dolls) that almost look like her.

One day, I was hurrying by while she sat with her dolls. I stopped to

chat and she asked me to watch her dolls for a few minutes. She was back in no time and before I continued on, she handed me one of them.

She is truly a special "Grandmother" strongly connected to the land and her people. In my visits with her, she's open to give advice. One day as my two boys (four and six years) played near her, she said, "With the help of their father, they are ready to shoot a bow and arrow." My only visual memory of bows and arrows took me back to cowboy and Indian movies, but I knew Atsaruaq was speaking from experience. When I first heard her telling pre-contact stories, I really worked hard on listening and mentally picturing the setting, season, characters, props, voices, and how far back in time she was bringing me. Now it is much easier for me to follow her Chevak dialect as I grew up with mainland Akulmiut dialect. My mother's grandparents were both raised in Chevak/Hooper Bay vicinity and that generation was born mostly along the Bering Sea coast before moving on to other parts of the region. Atsaruaq's *qulirat* stories start from her home area off the Bering Sea to Nelson Island (once surrounded by water) to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim and over to the Lower Yukon side as well as from Nunivak

Island. Many of her stories are non-fictional based on *Y/Cuuyaraq*. She opens up authentic ways of teaching. I think an orator and teacher such as Atsaruaq can bring all five senses alive through her seasoned life experiences. There are three AKRSI-sponsored events where many others like myself have had the opportunity to listen to her. One was a circle of ten Y/Cup'ik-speaking teachers who signed up for an Elder academy with KUC's associate professor, Cecilia Martz, June 30 to July 4, 1997. A statement was made by this group and published by Alaska Native Knowledge Network with a vision.

Y/Cuuyaraq

*Wangkuta Y/Cup'igni qanruyutet
aturluki anglituukut.*

*Ilakuyulluta, ukvertarluta,
pingnatuuluta.*

*Nallunrilamta Yuuyaramteni
piciryarangqerramta
nutemllarmek.*

*Qigckiyaram aturtai taringumaut
ellam ihuanelnguut elpengqellrit
nunuliutengqellrit-llu.*

*Qanruyutem aturtai
umyuartuluteng, elluatuuluteng,
nuuqitevkenateng
yuuluqaerciqut.*

Another opportunity for teachers to hear Atsaruaq tell a few stories took place in Anchorage with 40–50 Native teachers attending the State Bilingual Conference, February 1997. The 90-minute session I facilitated with her was very well attended as a Y/Cup'ik-speaking-only session, with simultaneous translation provided. The only drawback was that the sound system of the ballroom didn't work very well. In each story she gives credit by name to all the storytellers that she heard it from either at the beginning or end of each story.

She remembers a few bedtime
(continued on next page)

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Cup'ik Elder Atsaruaq Louise Tall

stories up to a certain part because as a little girl she fell asleep while her mother, Kaviaq, or Cimiralria was telling the story. The intent has always been to share stories with children in Y/Cup'ik. Currently, Atsaruaq is in a fall class Cecilia Martz offers through KUC with several Elders; there are 22 enrolled. She has told about nine hours of stories—some from the first academy as well as many new titles. This has provided a form of Cup'ik immersion for adults like myself, Oscar Kawagley, and many others. Following is a short story she told about herself. Louise Tall's first name, Atsaruaq, is after her paternal grandmother at birth. While a baby, she became ill and her parents asked a healing doctor (Angalkuq) for help. The following is translated (as best as possible) from the original Cup'ik version.

One fall season, I was still a baby and became very ill. My mother and father called a doctor for help because they were afraid I would die. The doctor told them he would bring back life for me from the land of the bearded seal and left. At bedtime, my parents put me

next to them and as the doctor told them; they also put a seal skin under their bed. In the middle of the night, my mother was awakened by a crying child to find me on top of the sealskin; both puzzled as to how I got there. After that, I got well. When I was growing up each spring, my skin would flake and my father would say that it was that time for bearded seal to do the same.

Later in her life, it stopped and she added it was when she changed her beliefs. In an unrelated story she talks about the legendary long-armed little people who could grant wishes people made when they met them along the way. They are called *Egacuayit*, and Atsaruaq laughs jokingly as she finishes this story that if she met one of those little guys today, she would wish for a healthy life.

Thank you for the opportunity to highlight an Elder from my region. There are many Elders who participate in AKRSI events and each one has contributed alot. Atsaruaq's independence and focus gets right to the point.

When she was a girl, she never entered a public school. Her education came from traveling seasonally with her grandparents, parents, and siblings. Atsaruaq's mother also married twice and raised 13 children. Atsaruaq grew up as the fourth child with two older brothers, an older sister, three younger brothers, and one younger sister. Their mother had more children with her second husband, adding four more brothers and a sister to her family. Today, her two younger brothers and two adopted brothers and sister are living. They all grew up in Chevak/Hooper Bay area. Atsaruaq also married twice and raised 13 children. Today, she has many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She lives in Bethel most of the year now with her youngest son and returns home to Chevak and Hooper Bay regularly. Many thanks go to Atsaruaq and Cecilia Martz for making it possible to get to know our neighbors. *Tua-ingunrituq, Piurci.* ✨

Alaska RSI Regional Contacts

Elmer Jackson

Iñupiaq Regional Coordinator
PO Box 134
Kiana, Alaska 99749
(907) 475-2257
email: fnej@uaf.edu

Barbara Liu

Yup'ik Regional Coordinator
Box 2262
Bethel, Alaska 99559
(907) 543-3467
email: fnbl@uaf.edu

Leona Kitchens

Aleutians Regional Coordinator
P.O. Box 921063
Dutch Harbor, Alaska 99692
(907) 581-5472
email: snowbank@arctic.net

Amy Van Hatten

Athabaskan Regional Coordinator
5230 Fairchild Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4525
(907) 474-0275
email: fyav@uaf.edu

Andy Hope

Southeast Regional Coordinator
University of Alaska Southeast
School of Business/PR
11120 Glacier Highway
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 465-8776
email: fnah@uaf.edu

Athabascan Region

by Linda M. Evans, ANCSA Curriculum Coordinator

Greetings from the desk of Linda M. Evans, ANCSA Curriculum Coordinator. I was hired in August by Doyon Foundation and Alaska Native Foundation under a memorandum of agreement with AKRSI. My task is to finish the job that Beth Leonard started which was to create a database on Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act curriculum resources and produce a CD-ROM of the most useful resources for rural schools for educational purposes only. Another task is to gather resources on the subsistence way of life and to develop curriculum units on ANCSA and the subsistence way of life.

I am originally from the village of Tanana. My parents are Horace and Harriet Roberts. I graduated from Copper Valley High School and received my elementary teaching degree from UAF in 1992. I taught a multi-grade classroom in Rampart for four years. Last year I taught preschool in Fort Yukon for the Yukon Flats School District. I am working on my master's degree in educational leadership. Just recently, my family

has moved to Fairbanks after spending the summer fishing in Rampart.

I would like to commend Beth Leonard on the superb job she has done on creating the ANCSA database. It was a tremendous job to gather all those resources and to review them to see which would be most useful for use on the CD-ROM. Another big thanks goes to Sean Topkok for his assistance in linking the database to the ANKN website. Now, the task I



am currently working on is familiarizing myself with the database and its resources and copyright issues to utilize the resources on the CD-ROM and other educational purposes.

If you know of any resources that you or others have developed for educational purposes with regard to ANCSA or subsistence way of life, please let me know. My phone number is (907) 474-5901; e-mail ftlme@uaf.edu; or mail to Linda M. Evans, ANKN, P.O. Box 756735, Fairbanks, AK 99775-6735. I look forward to hearing from you. ✨

The Alaska Native Educator Associations and the Alaska Native Knowledge Network invite you to participate in the

1999 Native Educator's Conference

Anchorage Sheraton Hotel

• January 31-February 2, 1998

• Anchorage, Alaska

Alaska Native Educators' have recently formed a series of regional associations to support initiatives aimed at addressing issues related to Alaska Native education. These associations will serve as the host for the 1999 Native Educator's Conference, to be held in conjunction with the annual Alaska Bilingual/Multicultural Education/Equity Conference.

The Native Educators' Conference will provide an opportunity for people engaged in education impacting Native people to come together and learn from each other's work and to explore ways to strengthen the links between education and the cultural well-being of indigenous people.

Information

For a registration packet and further information, contact Lolly Carpluk, Alaska Native Knowledge Network, University of Alaska Fairbanks, PO Box 756730, Fairbanks AK 99775-6730. Phone: 907-474-5086 or 907-474-1902, Fax: 907-474-5208, e-mail: ftlmc@uaf.edu or ffrjb@uaf.edu ✨

AISES Corner

(American Indian Science & Engineering Society)

by Claudette Bradley-Kawagley

This fall, the AISES science fairs acknowledge Elders as the first teachers of their culture. Elders have valuable knowledge of life and the environment they have lived in. Through the AISES program of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, village students are learning that Elders' knowledge is relevant to science and makes valuable contributions to scientific research.

Elders will be the judges in four regional science fairs. They will judge students' science projects in the following areas:

- science project's capacity to maintain Native values of the region,
- project's importance to Native culture,
- its importance to village life, and
- its contribution to the understanding of the land and assets of village and Native corporations.

The teacher/scientist judges will evaluate projects on the scientific method, detail, and accuracy of the research, and the project's best possible use of food or equipment. Both sets of judges will award students first, second, and third place prizes.

Students in Fairbanks Science Camp '98 held at Howard Luke's Gaalee'ya Spirit Camp along the Tanana river created at least five questions about their project from which to interview Elders. The camp had six Elders working as instructors. They were:

Elizabeth Frantz from Barrow
Elizabeth Fleagle from Manley Hot Springs
Margaret Tritt from Arctic Village
Howard Luke at home on the Tanana River

Jonathan David from Minto
Fred Alexander from Minto
These Elders taught students beadwork, yo-yo making, cleaning and tanning skins, and traditional stories. The students included the knowledge they learned from the Elders on the background information of their project. For example, students learned about the eating habits of wolves, researched the potency of healing plants, and how to tell the caribou's age by his teeth.

Prior to sending projects to the fair, every project must be evaluated by an adult sponsor, a science teacher/expert in the field, and an Elder in the village. The checklist for the evaluation included a list of values determined by a council of Elders in the region. The evaluator is to determine if the project maintains or does not maintain each value in the checklist.

If you are interested in entering the fair, you will need to obtain the handbook with the guidelines and registration forms for the fair.

Second Annual Arctic Regional Science Fair '98

Kotzebue, Alaska
Nov. 30–Dec. 2, 1998
Contact: Ruthie Sampson
907-442-3472



Second Annual Interior Science Fair '98

Fairbanks, Alaska
Nov. 30–Dec. 2, 1998
Contact: Dixie Dayo
907-474-5086

First Annual Kodiak Science Fair '98

Old Harbor, Alaska
Nov. 18–20, 1998
Contact: Teri Schneider
907-486-9031

First Annual Pribilof/Aleutians Science Fair '98

St. Paul Island, Alaska
January 1999
Contact: Debbie Bourdukofsky
907-546-2206

Two projects will be selected as grand prize winners from each fair. These projects will be sponsored to be entered in one of the following:

Alaska State Science Fair 99

University of Alaska
Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska
March 26–28, 1999
Contact: Margaret Cowan
907-465-2826

Annual AISES National Science Fair 99

Albuquerque, New Mexico
Contact: Karen Gomez
505-646-7740 ✨

Village Science: Science Unavoidable

by Alan Dick

Finding science in the village isn't hard. Avoiding it would be much harder. Scientific thinking is how we explore and make sense out of the world.

Most good river pilots have noticed the outboard motor increases in pitch when the boat goes from deeper to shallower water. There is more lift due to "ground effect," and the boat travels higher, thus going faster. That is easy to understand.

But why does the outboard motor seem to go faster after the sun has gone down? It is easy to say it is the result of an optical illusion, but the pitch of the engine also sounds higher, indicating greater speed, and the wake of the boat flattens out indicating faster travel. Does the boat really go faster and if so, why? I have pondered that for some time. Perhaps the air is denser, giving better combustion.

Last spring, my father-in-law asked me, "Have you seen the morning star lately?" I admitted that I never missed it. For months he had looked out the window early in the morning before

sunrise, looking for the morning star without success. He was so concerned that he looked with binoculars. Finally it appeared again. He was relieved. I thought, "He and I live on the same planet, but not in the same world." It was a great concern to him and I hadn't given it a thought. I always thought of him as a good hunter and traveler, never as an astronomer.

Many weather concerns are obvious. Willow grouse, high in the willows at dusk, fly away quickly when we approach unless a storm is coming and they know they won't eat until the storm passes. If they aren't wild, we know bad weather is coming. Most people in this part of Alaska know that. Yet I wonder, how do sun dogs indicate that cold weather is coming? When the loon calls loud and long on the lake in the summer, a strong wind is soon to follow. How do the loons

know this? What are the answers to these weather questions?

I have thought a lot about steambaths and the science involved in their operation. Recently, someone explained something to me that was so obvious I was embarrassed. I always wondered why pouring water on the hot rocks made the steambath seem so much hotter. I was thinking about the density of the air and other influences. Strategically placed thermometers didn't help me much. The answer is simple. It takes heat to evaporate water. When water condenses, heat is given off. When water is poured on the rocks, it evaporates into steam. When the steam condenses on our body, the heat required to evaporate the water is released. It is more than a matter of hot water droplets touching us. The latent heat of the steam is released on our skin as we lunge for the floor where the air is a little cooler.

The word "science" can be avoided, but the practice of it is a part of every day. The questions seem to mount faster than the answers. ✨

University of Alaska Fairbanks
Alaska Native Knowledge Network/Alaska RSI
PO Box 756730
Fairbanks AK 99775-6730

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