

# The Nome Static

KNOM Radio Mission  
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visit us at [knom.org](http://knom.org)



## dear friend of knom,

This November, you've given us so many reasons for gratitude. Indeed, as you'll read in this issue of the *Static*, your support is making so much possible.

Thanks to you, we're keeping close ties to the region we serve, whether by traveling to local villages for Alaska Native dance and music festivals (touchstones of the culture at the heart of our region, as described at right), or by reporting on retreats that are bringing together Alaska's youth to tackle some of our region's most serious issues (page 3).

Thanks to you, we're still moving forward with construction on our digital studios, a project that we firmly believe will bear fruit not only for future generations of KNOMers but, even more importantly, for future generations of Alaskans, too. More on page 2.

And thanks to you, we're still on the air after more than four decades of history in Western Alaska. You'll find a small slice of that history on pages 2 and 4.

Thanks to you, it is, truly, a great month to be giving thanks. We so appreciate all you do, and from all of us at KNOM, best wishes for a happy and healthy Thanksgiving.

*Lord, guide my steps in ways of grace, that they may ever be in harmony with the music to which You have set this world.*

## in teller, alaska, a singular festival — and a rite of passage

In the span of more than four decades on the air, KNOM has been blessed to develop positive relationships with so many of the listeners and communities of Western Alaska. Among the most special of these connections is Teller, a village, like Nome, located on the coast of the Seward Peninsula, about a two-hours' drive from KNOM's hometown and sharing much of its cultural heritage.

KNOM counts Teller residents among its most regular listeners, and unsurprisingly, it's a relatively frequent destination of village travel for our full-time volunteers. In winter, our volunteers benefit from being able to fly there for free, thanks to an ongoing sponsorship agreement with a regional airline. In late spring through early autumn, meanwhile, Teller is accessible by one of the regional highways that branch outwards from Nome, and in recent years, this 71-mile drive has become a mainstay of our volunteer program.

As one of this year's volunteer news reporters, Emily, describes in a recent blog post on our website, the trip was a must-do for her and her fellow '15-16 volunteers, not only as a rite of passage but also because of the special opportunities presented by the village's annual cultural festival, a gathering of Alaska Native drumming and dancing ensembles from throughout KNOM country.

By all indications, the dance performances of this year's Teller festival, such as the one pictured in the panorama above, were exceptionally vibrant and energetic — and, in fact, may have lasted *sixteen hours* in total. Emily explains: "While we didn't stay

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for all of the dancing, which, rumor has it, lasted until 9am the next morning, we did get to see some incredible and inspiring groups perform.”

Thanks to you, this special trip — undertaken by Emily and fellow volunteers **Mitch, Laura, and Maddie** (pictured at top) — will bear fruit in numerous ways. Not only do our volunteers have a deeper connection to the incredible place our mission serves, but — as has been the case with so many village trips in the past — they returned from Teller with material for production and music programming on KNOM’s airwaves (as well as a great story for our website). It’s possible through your generosity; thank you!

## next for our studios: computers

The equipment boxes that recently filled half of our studio building lobby are something special — and not just because they’re pictured flanked by our current class of volunteers (**Maddie, Mitch, Emily, and Laura**). The boxes contain the next step of a project with which many supporters will be familiar: our digital studios expansion and renovation.

As we transition into winter, work continues on the Tom and Florence Busch Digital Studios, the project that will see our broadcast spaces both expand and modernize, becoming, in the process, much more energy efficient and easier (and cheaper) to maintain.

The boxes pictured here contain the computers that will control our new broadcast spaces; as you might expect, a 21st-century radio studio runs largely off of specialized computer hardware and software. By the time you read this, we’ll have begun their installation, pushing us just one step closer to finally making the studios operational.

Of the \$1 million price tag for the studios’ construction and renovation, we’ve raised **\$843,589.65** as of our press date. As always, to learn more, visit us online at [knom.org](http://knom.org).

## novembers gone by

Here are a few quick looks at Novembers through the years at our mission — and within the pages of this publication.

Five years ago, in 2010, the *Static* happily reported the arrival of first year volunteer **Matthew Smith**, who was then serving as a public affairs director (pictured, top left, on page 4). After two successful years as a volunteer and time working in Anchorage in TV journalism, Matt returned as KNOM’s permanent



*The daylight shadows grow long, the tundra is frosted over, and snow covers the red and gold of autumn.*

*The birds have fled, and the carpets of summer blossoms are withered and gone.*

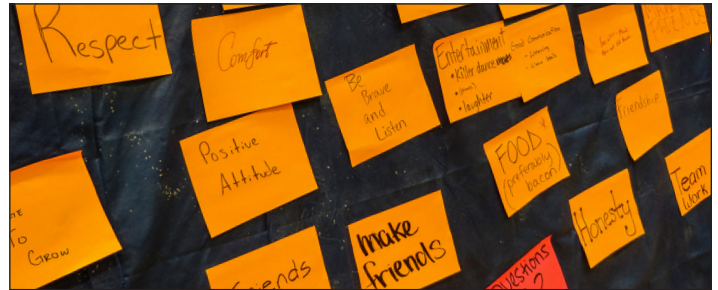
*Lord, as nature shuts down into darkness for the long winter, please be my light.*

*Shine in my heart and in the hearts of those I love.*

*Keep us in the warmth of Your presence always, and in the light of Your love.*







## a special retreat for wellness

The Western Alaska communities that your support enables KNOM to serve face a unique set of challenges — many of them severe. Among the most heartbreakingly persistent of our region’s woes are the related issues of isolation, poor mental health, and suicide, particularly among teenagers and young adults.

Many of the organizations and schools in rural Alaska are taking steps to combat the staggeringly high rates of depression and suicide in our corner of the world, and through your support, we’re doing all we can to help.

One recent example this autumn has been our reporting on a unique, powerful leadership retreat that took place in Unalakleet (YOU-nuh-luh-cleet), Alaska, a community located on the coast of the eastern Norton Sound (which some readers may recognize as one of the checkpoints of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race). Organized by regional school districts, the event gathered local youth to learn from a series of impactful speakers and teachers, who emphasized mutual communication, self-esteem, and concrete steps for suicide prevention.

As our on-site reporter, volunteer **Laura Kraegel**, describes, the students tackled these difficult subjects with aplomb:

*At a recent youth retreat in Unalakleet, I sat in on student workshops covering suicide prevention, gender dynamics, racial representation, and school culture. All weighty, complex topics that give most adults a tough time. All topics that I find*

*tricky to cover in my reporting.*

*But throughout the weekend, no matter the subject, I saw youth leaders dive into discussions with great intelligence and care.*

*They asked thoughtful questions. They shared personal stories. And they always seemed to have fun doing it — making new friends from different schools, and then supporting their peers through every ice-breaker and share circle.*

*It was a wonderful reminder that while there are challenges in our communities, we’re working through them — with each generation bringing new insight.*

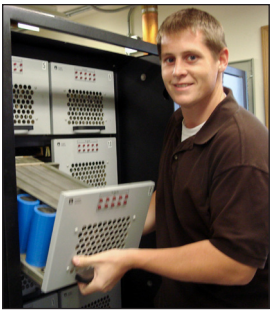
We thank you for enabling us to bring these crucially important stories to a wider audience. Especially with regards to the subjects this youth retreat addressed — mental health and suicide prevention — the need to serve our region could not be more urgent or vital. Your generosity makes such an incredible difference.

(Photos: scenes from throughout the Unalakleet retreat, including a board of the students’ future goals and aspirations for the event.)

*I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light;*

*I would rather walk with Him by faith than walk alone by sight.*

— Mary Gardner Brainard



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news director in 2014.

That same November '10 *Static* also recalled the November of 1980, when longtime US senator **Ted Stevens** was photographed by the Associated Press talking to the media in Washington, D.C. — while holding a KNOM coffee mug.

Ten years ago, meanwhile, the 90-mph winds of a "once in 30 years" storm in our region

ripped a large portion of siding from the station building's western exterior (easily dwarfing general manager **Ric Schmidt**, pictured). Then, as now, KNOM news went above and beyond to keep listeners informed on the storm's progress and how best to stay safe while waiting it out. Some within our listening area lost power for 5 ½ days during the storm; in Nome, a "little generator that could" helped keep the station on the air.



## a prayer for all souls

*"Remember our brothers and sisters who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again. Bring them and all the departed into the light of your presence..."*

In November — a month that begins with the Catholic feasts of All Saints and All Souls, the latter a remembrance of all those who have passed away — we remember the souls whose gifts to KNOM Radio Mission have allowed hope in Christ to flourish on Western Alaska airwaves.

We thank and remember those who have given support and prayer; those who have given their time in service as volunteers and staff; and those listeners who have allowed their stories and faith to be broadcast so it may inspire others.

Each of these souls has shared an unrepeatable uniqueness that has made KNOM's mission possible.

This month, we thank God for the spiritual treasure they've been to Western Alaska.

We pray for those who have gone before us, that God will bring to completion the good work they began in their lives.

(Photo: the cemetery and Bering Sea coastline in Teller, the same community described on page 1.)

*Serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace within the storm.*

## take knom with you

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Please consider KNOM in your estate planning.