

The Nome Static

KNOM Radio Mission
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Visit us at knom.org

Dear Friend,

Listening requires humility.

In the cultures of Western Alaska, people take time to listen: not speaking over another, not planning the next sentence while the other person speaks. That kind of selfless listening requires humility. Fully taking in what someone has to say honors the other person and opens the door for honest sharing.

On the radio, listening and sharing strengthens everyone. Hearing from people in other communities builds familiarity and consensus. Celebrating traditional values and language supports cultural vitality. The community helps us thrive.

Thank you for listening to and supporting the people of Western Alaska!



Cheri Alstrom shines in her Yup'ik regalia. Photo courtesy of Cheri Alstrom. Used with permission.

You have a unique message to deliver, a unique song to sing, a unique act of love to bestow.

This message, this song and this act of love have been entrusted exclusively to the one and only you.

Yup'ik model turns heads

"I wore my headdress, gaspeq, dance fans, ivory necklace and bracelet. I was turning heads," [Cheri Alstrom of St. Mary's](#) said.

Alstrom heard an advertisement about a fashion modeling agency by chance on the radio. She decided to take fashion to her roots at a convention in Orlando, Florida, where hundreds of models and actors perform in front of agents from all over the country.

When the time came to walk the high fashion runway, Alstrom donned her Yup'ik garb and waited her turn backstage. The reaction from the audience and her fellow performers caught her off-guard.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



KNOM producer John Coe happened to cross paths with Cheri Alstrom while he was on vacation. Coe attended the same convention and encountered Alstrom, a fellow Alaskan, by sheer coincidence. Alstrom's story has since been re-broadcast on radio stations around the state.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The crowd cheered wildly as Alstrom walked the runway. "They told me 'go represent!' I said, 'yes, for my people!' So that made me even more excited and happier. It was nothing I expected," she said.

"Yeah, we're not supposed to smile. And then I caught myself. I was like, 'oh no, I smiled.' And then I had to fix my face really fast. And all that cheering made me smile. Even though we weren't supposed to on the high fashion runway," Alstrom said.

Alstrom won second place for best fashion model overall. A talent agent called her the very next day.

Our job is to love others without stopping to consider whether or not they are worthy.

At the end of our lives, let us look back and measure our success by how well, how many and how often we loved.

Language survey results

["Language is larger than just the language itself"](#) – its culture, its connectedness to community and its willingness to also be part of that community," Ukallaysaaq Okleasik with Northwest Planning said.

Okleasik and political science professor Paasha Mahdavi followed up with listeners about the results of a survey that aimed to find a connection between Inuit languages and community engagement. The study showed a positive relationship between someone's comfort with speaking an Inuit language and involvement with cultural, community and civic activities.

Mahdavi and Okleasik were surprised that independent study emerged as the second most common way respondents learn Inuit languages. Okleasik pointed out that very few communities have immersion programs. The two suggested providing more opportunities and funding to learn Inuit languages as a way to strengthen communities.

"What that shows is that there's a motivation there. It shows that people are going after the resources that they can reach. If we have even more resources within reach, we are going to see a lot more engagement with the language itself," Mahdavi said.

They hope that organizations use this research to spur conversations and spark change.



Scotty Campbell and Ukallaysaaq Okleasik (who is also a KNOM board member) discuss language with listeners. Photo by Davis Hovey (2022).

Elder Wisdom: These are the words we must remember

[Elder Wisdom spots](#), derived from episodes of the longer form Elder Voices program, package important life lessons in accessible, bite-sized portions. Through oral tradition, Elders pass on the knowledge and values of their cultures. The spots have been very popular on social media, and shared widely.

Elder Wisdom with Robert Iyatunguk

There are times to talk, and there are times to listen. These are the words we must remember:

“Yeah, my name is Robert Iyatunguk. I was born in the village of Shishmaref in 1919 — quite a few years ago. There used to be some shamans — Angakkuq — the Eskimo way of life. I guess they weren't really a good thing, because Christianity hit Shishmaref, you know? There, they don't have that action anymore. Changed, I think, right away. You know, they believed; changed to Jesus. Jesus the one that is, you know, watching over us.”

Listen to their stories.



Visit the new spots page on knom.org to listen to Elder Wisdom and more! If you have a smart phone, you can hold your camera over the QR code to the left.



Megan Onders behind the microphone, getting ready for her first show. Photo by Davis Hovey (2022).

Nomeite starts Ocean Knowledge show

With a local and cultural context, [Megan Onders of Nome sparked conversation](#) about the ocean ecosystem, concerns and subsistence over the airwaves. Onders, who works at the Alaska Ocean Observing System, invites guests to share their expertise during the weekly Ocean Knowledge program. The show aims to provide inspiration and tools for people to become more engaged in ocean stewardship.

During the premiere, listeners heard from King Island Elder Sylvester Ayek, who shared about migrating to Nome, boat safety and how people stayed healthy on the island. Kate Haapala, an analyst with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, talked about the history of the council and the importance of considering local subsistence knowledge in the management of Alaska's fisheries. Final guest Gay Sheffield with the UAF Alaska Sea Grant shared about an on-going survey of harmful algal blooms and how they affect subsistence.

Throughout the show, listeners called in with shout-outs to people who make the best dried fish in their communities.

Visit the KNOM website to listen to full episodes of Ocean Knowledge.

We pray for the Church; ever faithful to, and courageous in preaching the Gospel, may the Church be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome, always living in an atmosphere of synodality.

— Pope Francis' prayer intentions for October 2022



Mike DeLue (left) and Dr. Jessica Garron shared an update on a project in Unalakleet where the coast guard taught locals to fly drones as a remote response team. Photo by Davis Hovey (2022).



Anna Ashenfelter and Nicole Santonastaso with the regional health corporation discuss breast feeding. Photo by Tony Calumet (2022).



King Island Elder Sylvester Ayek (left) joined Megan Onders (back right) and Davis Hovey (front right) for the premiere of Ocean Knowledge. Photo by Scotty Campbell (2022).

Please consider KNOM in your estate planning.
