

# The Nome Static

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Visit us at [knom.org](http://knom.org)

## Dear Friend,

On a fundamental level, radio is about making connections. In order to transmit a radio wave, the right equipment is connected to the right level of electricity. Through a radio, that electric pulse connects the right listener to the right on-air host or guest.

Each week, the broadcast schedule holds potential for life-changing relationships. Someone looking for work might hear about a new job opportunity on the *Job Files* show, or someone struggling with substance use might be inspired to fight for sobriety. Through radio, Western Alaskans stay well-connected: with one another, to the outside world, and to local resources.

Thank you, so much, for making the radio connection possible!

## Morning Prayer

*"Sometimes I feel alone in my own private valley of the shadow.*

*In those times, Jesus... I pray I remember that you're watching over me. And you ALWAYS give me what I need.*

*I'm not enough. But with you... all is well. Thank you, Jesus!*

*In your precious name,*

*Amen!"*

— Scotty Campbell on the KNOM morning show



Engineer Van Craft (left) and producer John Coe (right) work on equipment in the Anchorage studio. The remote studio opens new collaboration opportunities and helps offset staffing shortages in Nome. KNOM is immensely grateful to all who contributed to the project. Photo by KJ McElwee.

## Local help empowers land owners

It was a Unalakleet Elder who encouraged Francine Hopson to become [Kawerak's Tribal Land Management Services](#) (LMS) program director. "Someone needs to help our people," the Elder told her.

Alaska Native people hold deep ancestral ties to the land, and having a legal acknowledgement and system to steward that land is critical. Hopson's department is there to help: with veterans' land allotment claims, realty services such as land advertisements and lease agreements, wills, and more. Also, in the wake of ex-typhoon Merbok, they are providing a disaster-relief grant .

If it weren't for Hopson's position, tribal members in the Bering Strait region would face

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more barriers to legal access than they already do.

"We're able to one on one conduct our probate hearings, have people come into our office, be able to sit with Elders and explain things to them, where they're actually interacting with somebody that is from the region, somebody they know, rather than somebody they do not know, and somebody that's not from our region and does not understand," Hopson said.

Thanks to Kawerak's weekly radio program, Suwat, and host Danielle Slingsby, listeners can hear updates from local leaders like Hopson each Wednesday morning.

*"We pray that parishes, placing communion at the center, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most in need."*

— Pope Francis' prayer intention for February 2023



*Listeners heard Tiffany Hall describe ways Alaskans can help one another achieve sobriety and a healthy lifestyle. Photo courtesy of Recover Alaska.*

## Recover Alaska paves a path to healing

"I feel like I owe my life to being sober and being in recovery. And this was such a wonderful opportunity to be able to give my life back to helping other folks," Tiffany Hall said, speaking about how she became the executive director of [Recover Alaska](#).

Hall took to the airwaves to share a bit of her personal journey with alcohol and offer a helping hand to people struggling. The interview is part of their month-long 'Dry January' campaign, encouraging people to start the new year by trying out sobriety. The initial interview with Hall was followed up with a series of daily spots about alcohol recovery.

Hall said her team recently conducted an exercise for identifying barriers and connecting them to track down the root cause of alcohol consumption struggles. The most common challenge they found was stigma.

"Almost every single barrier that we face, throughout the continuum of this work, had an arrow back to stigma," Hall said. "Stigma causes so much of these issues. It makes it so challenging for people to admit that they maybe need help, it makes it difficult for people to then ask for help and it makes it difficult for loved ones to talk to other people about how to deal with this because they're ashamed or embarrassed."

Hall shared that it was hearing someone else's story that made her realize she needed help when she was struggling with addiction. Recover Alaska offers a platform to share testimonies on their website. During the 'Dry January' challenge anyone choosing to abstain from alcohol could text a hotline to receive daily encouragement and community support.

At its heart, Recover Alaska is in the business of breaking down barriers to healing, Hall said. The team works to help people access care where they live, reduce the stigma that prevents addicts from admitting they have a problem with alcohol, and celebrate those who choose recovery. The long-term goal is to reduce excessive alcohol use across the state.



## Elder Wisdom with Esther Kimoktoak

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

“Hi. My name is Esther Kimoktoak from Koyuk. I’ve had close calls like two times. I just hurt my shoulder the first time. But the next one was a close call. God held me from going away — I always think that’s a miracle.

I was thrown off of my four wheeler on an embankment. The last thing remember is when I flew over the four wheeler. I didn’t really know when I landed. I woke up with lots of people around me. I think maybe they thought I was dead.

I feel that they would understand how life is precious and how they should live. Try to live the right way. Try to understand what life is about and what it’s not... We won’t have a lasting life on this earth. It’s got to end somehow. It’s better to try to live better and acknowledge that we have a Savior who wants to give us eternal life.”

Listen to their stories.

*Longtime engineer and volunteer Les Brown dedicated many years to serving the people of Western Alaska on the midnight airwaves. His last prerecorded shows played out a month after his passing. For a last hurrah, KNOM aired a tribute to Les during his usual 12-1 a.m. show time. It featured highlights and memories of his time at KNOM, background on his life, and prerecorded stories from Les. Visit [knom.org](http://knom.org) to hear the [memorial show](#). Photo by David Dodman (2011).*



*Davis Hovey and Suwat host Danielle Slingsby prepare equipment to record an elementary school performance. Photo by KJ McElwee.*



*This Elder Wisdom spot and more can be found under the [programs](#) tab at [knom.org](http://knom.org). If you have a smart phone, hold the camera over the QR code to the left.*



*The sun sets behind the AM transmitter site, after assessing preventative work needed on the building's electrical system. Photo by Davis Hovey.*

## **Meter box receives an ounce of prevention, in Les' spirit**

Work has resumed on the meter box at KNOM's AM [transmitter](#) site after an explosion in the fall of 2021 required a local electrician to put together a temporary solution.

After Interim General Manager Davis Hovey and electrician Toby Higginson went to inspect the building, Toby determined that the meter box is again in danger of exploding, which could potentially cause a fire and damage the transmitter building beyond repair.

As the late Les Brown noted before he passed, this temporary fix has already celebrated its one-year anniversary. It's best not to push our luck. Thanks to Toby and his expertise, the proper parts are on their way, in order to fully replace the meter box and prevent future hazards.

"Les continues to be a voice of precaution and sound advice, guiding me and KNOM in the moments we need him the most. I will always be thankful for Les and his guidance," Davis said.



*Nomeite Sarah Richards' dog team reigned victorious after a friendly eight-mile hometown race put on by the Nome Kennel Club in January. Photo by KJ McElwee.*

## **Snow Machine races**

January in Alaska means slowly gaining daylight and plenty of snow for travel, subsistence, and fun. With no roads, that means more and more people are riding [snowmachines](#), both in town and out in the backcountry.

As Western Alaskans know, the knowledge of how to stay safe in varying conditions saves lives. There are plenty of stories about someone going alone and getting surprised by a storm, or getting a rig stuck in deep snow.

Recently, listeners heard Mike Buck of the Alaska Safe Riders discuss basic snowmachine safety: for example, wearing a helmet. Ahead of this year's Iron Dog Race, Buck and his team are giving away 450 snowmachine helmets in communities along the trail. Buck also shared some of the safety tools he and his team have compiled, such as leaving a loved one with detailed trip information and a checklist of which emergency items were brought.

*God does not love us because we're valuable. We're valuable because God loves us.*

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**Please consider KNOM in your estate planning.**

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