

88-49-08

Celebration of New Year's in Native villages, Gwich'in music

Unidentified interviewer

Series: Potlatch series

The program begins with Gwich'in music. The work was produced by Ethnic Folkways Library. Song of the snow geese flying over the mouth of the Yukon by Daniel John of Fort Yukon. Lily Pitka of Fort Yukon sings three love songs. Lucy John taught her one of the songs.

Akiak celebrations for New Year's Eve including dog team races, foot races and snowmachine races are discussed. Movies and dances are also part of the celebrations. There's an evening service that starts at 11:00. Ann Nicolai asks the speaker, Matthew Ollallee, to translate.

Three medicine songs by Silas John from Arctic Village, Stanley Luke from Fort Yukon and Johnny Frank from Goldcamp are sung. Jeff Kennedy talks about Indian medicine men and where they get their power. Jeff Kennedy talked about the battles between the Chandalar Gwich'in and the Eskimos of the Arctic Slope.

Oscar Frank talked about celebrating the New Year in Yakutat. The community puts on a program and the churches also put on programs.

Two crow dance songs by Myra Robert from Venetie and Lily Pitka from Fort Yukon. The producer talks about the Gwich'in crow dance ceremony.

Ann Nicolai interviews Levi Lott from Tuluksak about New Year's Eve celebrations. Right at midnight everyone shoots their guns. They burn their Christmas trees in a big bonfire. Other activities are planned. Levi translates what he just said.

Myra Robert of Venetie sings two songs of tribute. The song story about the boy and the moon is sung by Myra Robert. The New Year's song is sung by Lily Pitka. An old fashioned tradition celebrated at New Year's is discussed.

Jeff Kennedy thanks Bill Fretson for the album of Alaskan Gwich'in Indian music.

Jeff Kennedy said Potlatch is produced in the KUAC studios in College in cooperation with KTOO Juneau, KOTC Kotzebue and KYUK Bethel under Title One of the Higher Education Act.