

**October 12, 1990:** Nome sees its first serious snowfall of the season.

**October 30, 1990:** At the age of 68, Catherine Kelsey, RN arrives as a KNOM volunteer support nurse.

The widowed mother of ten, all of whom are out of the nest, after Luella Poole, Catherine is the oldest person to devote a full year of volunteer service to the mission.

**November 6, 1990:** One or two swings with a sledgehammer are enough to take down entire four-foot sections of the walls of the old "Crooked House."

With most of the walls gone, Brother Ray hopes to pull over the sagging roof.

However, the structure is weaker than he thought, and it begins to lean perilously in the direction of St. Joseph's Church, just eight feet away.

Nome resident Jim West, Jr. leaps to the rescue. With a small bulldozer, he nudges the building toward an open area, and it collapses into several pieces.

**November 11, 1990:** Brother Ray leaves, having completed eleven tough years of service as KNOM maintenance chief.

**January 11, 1991:** KNOM applies to the Federal Aviation Administration for authority to construct a new 80-foot tower, with the highest antenna 94 feet above ground, at the studio.

KNOM's existing 69-foot-high studio tower must be replaced, as one of its guy wires crosses where the planned new studio building will be located.

Approval comes exactly one month later.

**February 1991:** Snow drifts to the rooftops in Nome.

This month, areas of the KNOM studio floor mysteriously deteriorate. Under the carpet, several large spots are extremely soft.

*INSPIRATIONAL SPOT: Lord God, Our Creator, help me to create, too. Create peace by my forgiveness. Create understanding by my being open-minded. Create hope by my gentle caring. Create love by generously serving others.*

## Highlights of KNOM History

“It feels like if you stepped hard enough you’d fall right through!” says Timothy Cochran.

**February 14 – April 10, 1991:** A survey conducted by Willhight Radio Research of Seattle indicates that while two or more radio stations can be heard in every village which KNOM reaches, KNOM’s listenership is 94.7%.

In Nome, which has a total of three radio stations, KNOM’s share of adults is 62.9%.

**March 2, 1991:** A record 74 dog teams containing 1,294 dogs begin the 19th Iditarod Race. Among the drivers are Russians Nikolai Ettenye and Alexander Reznyuk, who finish the race seventeen days later, in 36th and 37th place.

By the end of today, KNOM’s Tom Busch, Katy Clark and Stacy Loucks have completed 49 musher interviews. Snippets of six of them are carried today by the AP Radio Network.



(Above) Volunteer music director Angie Munoz inspects wind-sculpted drifts, in a photo taken from the KNOM studio front steps, February 1991. The drifts near KNOM are half the height of even more mountainous piles of snow in the northeastern part of town.

**March 4, 1991:** The Iditarod is only three days old, and already, Stacy Loucks has fed KNOM 22 musher interviews from the trail. There's no exact count, but throughout the course of the race, Stacy conducts about 120 interviews.

**Early March 1991:** Howling blizzards pile a massive snowdrift all the way to the roof of the Community House, completely covering the building's back door. The roof is also straining under a foot-thick slab of ice.

KNOM'ers pray that this "temporary" barracks building can hold up just two more months.

There is no *Nome Static* Transmission #289, as February's 288 is followed by March's 290. "I goofed," says Tom Busch.

**April 10, 1991:** KNOM applies to the FCC for permission to build low-power KNOM-FM, a project funded by a \$15,829 grant



(Above) The back section of the old Community House is hauled away, July 1991. Note the thin, flimsy walls, floor and ceiling.

## Highlights of KNOM History

from *Our Sunday Visitor*.

**July 1991:** The staff considers it miraculous: KNOM has been given enough funds to replace the volunteer dormitory. The 50-year-old “temporary” Community House dorm is sliced in half and removed. The new volunteer dorm will be situated on its lot.

Next door, near where the “Crooked House” once sat, 12-inch H-beam pilings are sunk 50 feet into the ground to support a new 80-foot tower for the future studio’s microwave dishes.

**August 24, 1991:** Builder Pat Hahn sets the first beams for a new volunteer dorm.

It has been named “The Luella Poole Community House” to honor Fr. Poole’s mother.

**August 1991:** Contractor Rod Ewing stick-builds KNOM’s new 80-foot tower, for the station’s microwave dishes, remote broadcasting antennas, and eventually, the transmitting antenna for KNOM-FM.



**Late December 1991:** Volunteers Jim Lawhon and Dave Renner help Pat Hahn, Tom Busch and Timothy Cochran lift 72 sheets of dry wall up to the new dormitory’s second story deck, dangerous work at -20°, with no railing and light snow making footing slippery. They haul another 128 heavy sheets through the front door.

The station has now been given \$265,000 toward

**(Left) Rod Ewing assembles the new self-supporting studio tower. Visible are the 1970 tower’s guy wires.**

construction of a new studio, which is estimated to cost \$425,000.

**January 15, 1992:** The dorm's drywall is up, and the walls and ceilings are "taped and mudded" and ready for painting.

**February 1992:** Volunteer news director Cherie Collins flies 925 miles to the villages of Unalakleet, St. Marys, Stebbins, Hooper Bay, Chevak and Scammon Bay.

Among other items, she produces a touching news story on Hooper Bay Eskimo leader Dennis Lake, who had suffered years of alcoholism. Sober, he is the organizer of a sobriety movement in the village.

Cherie is fulfilling a lifelong dream of her parents. Twenty-three years ago, Jim and Ellie Collins were set to move to Alaska as Jesuit Volunteers when they learned they were expecting a child - Cherie.

KNOM Update News reports this month that the powers that be on Little Diomed Island judge that the village's water tank is



**(Above) Radio volunteer Bridget Dietz is probably regretting that she offered to blow insulation into the ceiling of the new volunteer dormitory, January 1992.**