

*The Family of Edna N. Ahnangnatoguk*

PO Box 1845 | Nome, AK 99762

December 3, 2024

Nome Common Council  
City of Nome Alaska  
PO Box 281  
Nome, AK 99762

Dear Nome Common Council,

I hope this letter finds each of you well. I am writing to express our heartfelt appreciation for the exemplary service provided by several City of Nome employees during a profoundly difficult time for our family. Specifically, we would like to recognize “Santa” Paul Kudla, Cole Cushman, Francois Haba, Chris Schuneman, Jeff Snyder, and Brad Soske.

On October 26, 2024, our family experienced a great loss with the passing of our family matriarch, Edna N. Ahnangnatoguk, affectionately known as “Gaga”. At 96 years old, Gaga was a remarkable woman whose independence, kindness, and humor touched the lives of many. She was deeply devoted to her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and her legacy of love will forever remain in our hearts. I’m including a copy of the obituary for Gaga, as I feel it’s important to have a glimpse of the incredible person she was.

As we gathered on October 31, 2024, to honor her life and lay her to rest next to her late husband (and our family patriarch), Frank E. Ahnangnatoguk, we were met with extraordinary kindness and empathy from the employees mentioned above. It has taken us some time to put this letter together as we navigate our grief, but Gaga emphasized the importance of expressing gratitude for the kindness we receive.

Mr. Soske played a crucial role in assisting our family with the necessary documentation for obtaining a Burial Permit. His patience and understanding made a challenging process much smoother for us.

As we prepared for the interment, we were continually supported by Mr. Cushman, Mr. Haba, Mr. Schuneman, Mr. Snyder, and especially Santa Paul. Their dedication to their work, which often goes unnoticed, was evident in every interaction we had. As part of the Public Works Department, they not only ensure traveling through our city is safe but also provide compassionate interment services that honor the memories of our loved ones – which anyone would agree is a difficult yet delicate task.

The location of Gaga’s interment was treated with the utmost respect and care, fulfilling her wish to be laid to rest beside her husband. During the interment, Mr. Snyder and Santa Paul worked diligently, ensuring each bucketful of gravel was delicately placed with precision and care until

completion. Mr. Haba's attentiveness to our family's safety and his respectful demeanor further exemplified the compassion we received.

We want the Nome Common Council and the City Manager to know how invaluable these employees are to our community. Their hard work and dedication deserve recognition, and we hope they are acknowledged for their contributions.

Lastly, we would like to extend our deepest appreciation to Santa Paul for his delicate and hard work at the Nome Cemetery. While some may view cemeteries as somber places, we see them as peaceful resting places for our loved ones (as many from our family are interred here in Nome). Santa Paul's efforts in maintaining the Nome Cemetery, from the protective fences to the meticulous landscaping and refreshment of the City Morgue, create an environment of tranquility and respect. His kindness during our time of loss did not go unnoticed, and we are truly grateful.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. We hope that you will convey our appreciation to these remarkable individuals who have made a significant impact on our family during a time of sorrow.

Sincerely,



Gail E. Smithhisler  
(907) 304-2811

**Enclosure:** Obituary

**CC:** City Manager  
City Clerk

*Gaga's Surviving Children*

Alma Smithhisler, Ronald (Sarah) Ahnangnatoguk, son-in-law Albert McComas, and nephew William "Billy" (Bessie) Baxter

*Gaga's Surviving Grandchildren*

John Ahnangnatoguk, Gail Smithhisler, Thomas (Jasmine) McComas, Joshua McComas, Donny Ahnangnatoguk, Steven Ahnangnatoguk, and Allen John Ahnangnatoguk

*Gaga's Surviving Great-Grandchildren*

Frank Ahnangnatoguk, Nutaasaq Ahnangnatoguk, Piniq Ahnangnatoguk, Strom Ahnangnatoguk, Daniel Tocktoo, Aubriana Otton, Taylor Ahnangnatoguk, Rosalie Ahnangnatoguk, Ella Alston, Christian Ahnangnatoguk, Judah McComas, Elias McComas, and Dallas Menadelook



**With love and appreciation:**  
***The Ahnangnatoguks,***  
***the McComas',***  
***and the Smithhislers.***

**Gaga's children:**

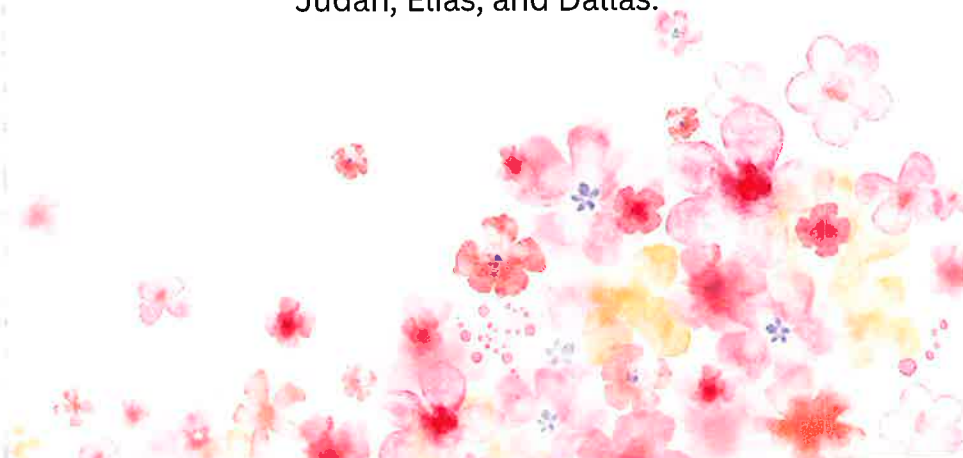
Alma, Ron (Sarah), and son-in-law Albert

**Gaga's grandchildren:**

John, Gail, Thomas (Jasmine), Joshua,  
Donny, Steven, and Allen

**Gaga's great-grandchildren:**

Frank, Nutaasaq, Piniaq, Strom,  
Aubriana, Taylor, Rosalie, Ella, Christian,  
Judah, Elias, and Dallas.







## Psalm 23

He maketh me lie down in green pastures; he  
leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the  
paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the  
shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou  
art with me; thy rod and thy staff they  
comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the  
presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my  
head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the  
house of the Lord for ever.

# Thank You

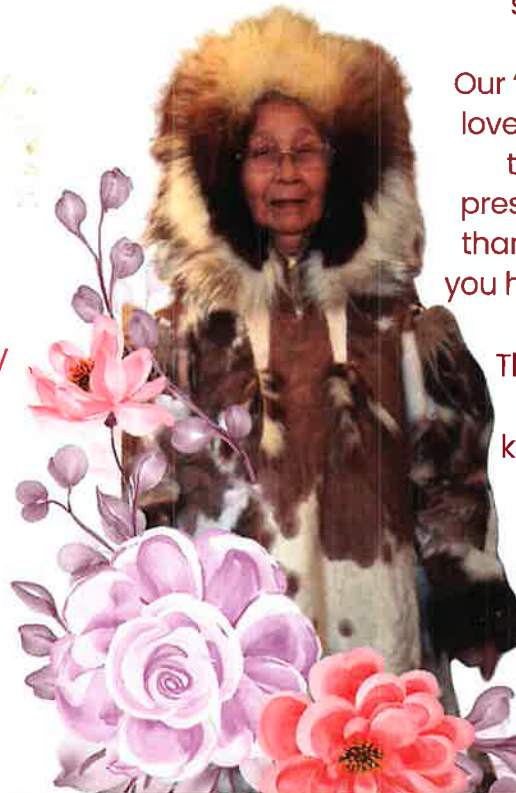


The family of Edna N.  
Ahnangnatoguk would like to  
express our heartfelt appreciation  
and gratefulness for your generous  
kindness and the outpouring of love and  
support during this difficult time.

Our "Gaga" was treated with the utmost  
love and respect by everyone who had  
the privilege of encountering her  
presence. We cannot say enough how  
thankful we are for the way so many of  
you have loved and cherished our Gaga.

Though this is a challenging moment  
for our family, we find comfort in  
knowing just how deeply she was  
cherished by so many.

Your support means  
the world to us.



## PALLBEARERS

JOHN AHNANGNATOGUK    FRANK AHNANGNATOGUK  
JOSHUA MCCOMAS        DONNY AHNANGNATOGUK  
THOMAS MCCOMAS        STEVEN AHNANGNATOGUK  
STROM AHNANGNATOGUK   ALLEN AHNANGNATOGUK

## HONORARY PALLBEARERS

RONALD AHNANGNATOGUK  
ALBERT MCCOMAS  
DONNIE SMITH



*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days  
of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

*Psalm 23: 6*

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF



*Edna Nutaasag  
Ahnangnatoguk*

**March 10, 1928 ~ October 26, 2024**

—  
NOME, ALASKA



# ORDER OF SERVICE

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN: "IN THE SWEET BY & BY"

ISAIAH 54:10: THOMAS MCCOMAS

PSALM 23: ALMA SMITHHISLER

JOHN 14: 1-3: JOSHUA MCCOMAS

HYMN: "WHERE HE LEADS ME"

MESSAGE: PASTOR AMANDA SNYDER

EULOGY

SHARING MEMORIES

FAMILY: "WHAT A DAY THAT WILL BE"

HYMN: "GOD BE WITH YOU"

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

## OBITUARY

Edna Nutaasaq Ahnangnatoguk was born on March 10, 1928, in Iglu, Alaska. Her parents, James Eyuk and Eva Topkaruk Eyuk, were at the heart of her upbringing alongside her siblings. Edna joined older siblings May Mesuk Eyuk, David A. Eyuk, and Annie K. Eyuk and later welcomed younger siblings Agnes Noyakuk and Clara Veara.

Growing up in Iglu, Edna attended school up to the sixth grade. She often fondly recalled her experiences with Helen Frost, a dedicated missionary who played a pivotal role in the community as a teacher and healthcare provider.

Edna possessed a talent for sewing and produced many warm garments for her family using various animal pelts and home-tanned animal skins. Her skills extended to working as a nurse's aide and later as a dorm aid at the William E. Beltz High School, where she warmed the lives of students who attended the boarding school.

Edna's path crossed with Frank Ahnangnatoguk where they married on November 27, 1950. Together, they were blessed with four children: James Ahnangnatoguk, Alma Smithhisler, Ronald Ahnangnatoguk, and Florence McComas. Edna cherished her role as a grandmother and great-grandmother, earning the endearing nickname "Gaga" from her oldest grandson, John. Gaga was proud of her family and their accomplishments, and always looked forward to spending time with them.

Passionate about preserving their faith and heritage, Papa Frank and Gaga instilled the values of a subsistence lifestyle in their descendants, emphasizing self-sufficiency and connection to the land and sea. Gaga found solace and joy at camp in Tuksruk and Iglu, surrounded by nature and family.

Gaga's legacy lives on through her children, Alma Smithhisler, Ronald (Sarah) Ahnangnatoguk, son-in-law Albert McComas, and her "other son" Donnie Smith; her grandchildren, John Ahnangnatoguk, Gail Smithhisler, Thomas (Jasmine) McComas, Joshua McComas, Donny Ahnangnatoguk, Steven "Puttu" Ahnangnatoguk, and Allen Ahnangnatoguk; her great-grandchildren, Frank Ahnangnatoguk, Nutaasaq Ahnangnatoguk, Piniaq Ahnangnatoguk, Strom Ahnangnatoguk, Aubriana Otton, Taylor Ahnangnatoguk, Rosalie Ahnangnatoguk, Christian Ahnangnatoguk, Judah McComas, and Elias McComas.

Gaga's journey was culminated in a Heavenly reunion with her husband Frank; son, James; daughter, Florence "Goong Goong"; her parents and siblings; son-in-law Donald Smithhisler, granddaughter, Tracy Ahnangnatoguk; her uncles Keelick and Fred Mosquito; nieces Marcella Eyuk, Diane Baxter, and Marilyn Noyakuk; nephews David Roy Eyuk, Dewey Baxter, Eric Baxter, and numerous other departed loved ones in a celestial embrace.