

ATHABASCAN

word of the week

New parkas made at home for Christmas



Photo by Delores Saunders

Left to right: Salone Saunders and Candice Saunders model the parkas their mother, Delores Saunders, made for them. Delores copied the pattern from the parka Stephanie Vaughn is wearing.

I made parkas for my daughters, Salone and Candice. Stephanie Vaughn, daughter of Sandra McCafferty, was the model in my mom's purple parka. I copied the pattern from mom's parka. Candice picked out the material, and she and Salone told me how they wanted it designed. Candice help me with sewing her parka and Salone did some. Both have fox fur ruff. My husband, Floyd Saunders Sr., the bookworm, was in the back reading some books he got for Christmas from his mother, Thelma Saunders, of Kaltag.

Note from Susan Paskvan: When we were kids, all the ladies used to sew, sew, sew. On Christmas day, each child got one toy and some new handmade clothing. The handmade clothing is much warmer and durable than store-bought clothing because it is designed for cold and wind.

— Delores Saunders

Phrases:

de'aak: parka

netonye: ruff

nohbaaye: red fox

The Athabascan Word of the Week appears every Saturday on page A3 of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. The words are provided by Susan "K'etsoo" Paskvan of Yukon-Koyukuk School District. She is originally from the village of Koyukuk on the Yukon River in Interior Alaska. She is Tleeyegge Hut'aane, which is Koyukon Athabascan. She seeks stories and phrases from both Denaakk'e (Koyukon Athabascan) and Denak'a (Lower Tanana Athabascan), which are languages spoken in the Yukon-Koyukuk School District region. Yukon-Koyukuk School District serves the villages of Allakaket, Hughes, Huslia, Koyukuk, Nulato, Kaltag, Ruby, Manley Hot Springs and Minto. The Board of Education places a priority on teaching the Native languages within the district.