



HAPPINESS IS FNA POTLATCH—A capacity crowd watched and guffawed at the antics of the Fairbanks Native Association's performers at its annual potlatch program last Saturday at the Lathrop High School gym. At the moment, the highly amused native people are guffawing at the

comical and inept nalukatuk (blanket toss) performers who landed on the blanket in all manners of ungraceful landing. Reportedly, around 2,000 natives and whites attended the popular FNA annual potlatch. See story on page 4.

—JOHN METZGER Photograph

FNA POTLATCH . . . A GREAT, BIG SUCCESS



INVITATIONAL DANCE—A mass of Eskimo dancers are happily dancing to the beat of Barrow drummers and chanters. Many white people, including Sen. Ted Stevens, joined in the dance.

—JOHN METZGER Photo



ESKIMO DANCE—Eskimo dancer is warming up vigorously. He will later be joined by many dancers in the invitational dance. Drummers are from Barrow and Fairbanks.

—IGOR-FLYNN Photo

Superb Potlatch Where Friends Meet, Renew Acquaintances, Dance

By SUSAN TAYLOR
Staff Writer

Saturday night. . . annual Potlatch. . . Lathrop High School cafeteria and gymnasium over 2,000 people slopping through a muddy parking lot to face a line that seemed to have no end. . . people from Fairbanks and rural villages all over Alaska. . . all waiting in line. . . young natives in mini skirts, older natives in the traditional dress of their people, Caucasian Alaskans. . .

For many, the waiting was a time for reunion, for a smile, a handshake, or warm hug for

friends not seen in a long time. . . finally, a stamp on the hand and the food was a little nearer.

Inside the cafeteria. . . more greetings and more friends. . . food donated by the village people. . . plates stacked with moose, caribou, muktuk, fish, beaver, reindeer and salmon along with potato salad, macaroni, ham, chicken and bread. . . village natives eating familiar foods. . . others taking that unforgettable first bite of muktuk and chewing, and chewing, and chewing.

An evening more rewarding to Caucasians when shared with an

Eskimo or Indian friend. . . and possibly vice versa. . . a lot to be taught and a lot to be learned. . . and a chance to do both.

Politicians mingling among the cafeteria crowd. . . knowing that the natives comprise about 30 per cent of the eligible voting population. . . wanting to win in August. . . shaking hands, waving, signing autographs, meeting friends of friends and smiling.

Like a big reunion or family dinner except for one thing: no small children running around.

A cafeteria line that finally ended. . . enough food for all with a little left over. . . ticket sales reaching the \$8,000 mark. . . but not all was profit. . . bills for ham, chicken, plates.

Native dancers in the gym following dinner. . . young dancers from St. Mary's carrying on a tradition centuries old. . . colorful costumes. . . hands telling a story as no words ever could. . . drums that accompanied age-old chants. . . an older native who laid down his drum and stick to show the audience how it is really done. . . a swell of laughter and applause following his dance.

A large group. . . about 25. . . young and old from Minto and Nenana. . . more chanting. . . more drum beats. . . modern themes in ancient dances. . . first the twist, then the sno-go dance.

Other dancers from Point Barrow.

An evening termed a complete success by one of the organizers, Mrs. Mary Jane Fate.



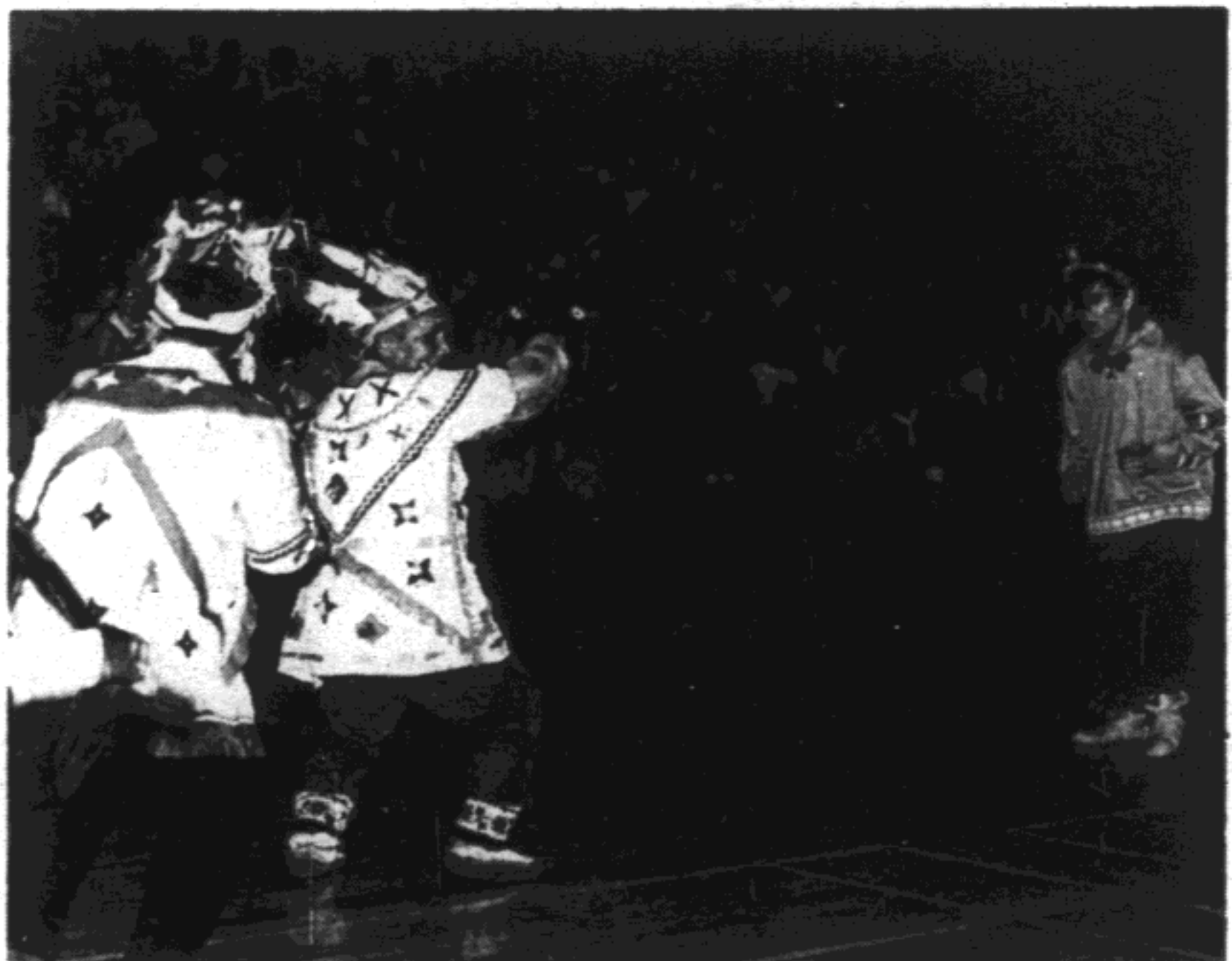
CHARMING POTLATCH SERVER—Beautiful Mrs. Mary Jane Fate of Athabascan descent, is helping to serve food for over 2,000 FNA Potlatch customers. Mary Jane is Tundra Times board member.

—JOHN METZGER Photo



TOSSED HIGH—A pretty Eskimo girl is performing on the nalukatuk (blanket toss).

—JOHN METZGER Photo



MINTO DANCERS—Ever popular Minto dancers are performing their colorful dances with modern touches as the Snow-go Dance.

—IGOR-FLYNN Photo



CLASSIC GESTURE—Mrs. Olga Amaouak is Eskimo dancing to the beat of the drum of her husband, Oliver.

—JOHN METZGER Photo