



Maggie Sipary, a 15-year Anchorage resident, receives a happy hug from Mrs. Eva Merryfield, an alternative counselor at the Cook Inlet Native Associations Community Education Department. Both women were attending the Minority Elders forum sponsored by the Municipality of Anchorage Department of Social Services Senior citizens Program on Monday.

Minority elders speak out at forum

By LOUISE DONHAUSER
Tundra Times Staff

No matter what their ethnic background, minority elders in the Anchorage area have the same problems, the need to communicate with people of their own ages and backgrounds and the inability to leave their homes because of transportation problems.

These needs and other concerns were vocalized this week when more than 100 people of the Anchorage Native, Korean, Filipino, Chinese and Black community participated in a Minority Elders Forum. The forum was sponsored by the Municipality of Anchorage.

Mae Stanley of the Cook Inlet Native Association told

the people assembled "Many of our people come to Anchorage against their will. They are here because their family is here. They would prefer to be home."

Stanley said she has found working with elderly people that "They like to get together. It's very important to our people to continue their lifestyle. Riding the bus, using a telephone is foreign to them. It's an alien world."

CINA serves meals to the elderly on a daily basis which Stanley said is very important for the mental well being of the elderly -- no matter what their background.

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Elders need to be with peers

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"It's important for certain groups to have their own club. They still need their own burrow. We serve Native food which is very hard for them to get," in Anchorage, she said.

"They enjoy being around young people. It's important to continue to have small lunch sites," she said.

Patrick Anderson, a Native lawyer, said "I look at my elders and there are very few of them. Anchorage is foreign to them."

He said many elderly people have found no job market for them in Anchorage because of limited education. But he added that "Those of us who are young want to know about the needs of elders. We all have something to offer. The (future Anchorage Multipurpose Senior

Center) should be one that allows all segments of the community to interact."

As a panel of speakers discussed a city board appointed to discuss and help the problems of the elderly in Anchorage, one black man grabbed the microphone and demanded to know why no blacks had been appointed. Another man demanded to know why Anchorage Mayor George Sullivan had appointed no Natives to the group.

A panel member responded that Sullivan made his appointments on the basis of a questionnaire sent to various groups which dealt with the elderly in the area.

The rest of the forum featured representatives of social service agencies which serve the elderly in Anchorage.

Those services include the Older Persons Action group which provides information to the elderly; the Alaska Legal Service which may help the elderly with legal problems if the service receives funding for the coming year;

The Adult Literacy League Project which provides volunteer tutors for the English language; the Home Health Agency which offers physical and speech therapy for senior citizens on doctors orders; the Salvation Army Seniors program which offers meals, transportation and a Saturday shopping service, and alcohol abuse counselors;

The Housing and Community Service which helps seniors get financial aid to correct housing problems and pay fuel costs; and the senior citizen job service which helps seniors get jobs.

May 27, 1981

Joyce J. and Harvey Rodney.
Girl, 9 lbs., 12 ozs., from Anchorage.

Minnie I. and Robert H. Snyder.
Girl, 5 lbs., 6½ ozs., from Akia-chak.

May 30, 1981

Della A. and Jerry D. Trumble.
Girl, 7 lbs., 2½ ozs., from King Cove.

Hilda Sue Apassingok, Boy.
Darrel George, 10 lbs., 2 oz.,
20½ inches at 4:52 a.m. in Gambell.

June 1, 1981

Edna and Emmitt G. Peters,
Boy, 3 lbs., 10½ ozs., from Ruby.