

JOM Camp teaches children pride and tradition

by Steve Kakaruk
Tundra Times

The SouthCentral Foundation/Johnson-O'Malley Program's "Summer Safety and Cultural Camp" began on June 1 and is expected to continue back-to-back sessions for the next four weeks. The camp was formerly known as Camp Na Du Nae.

Despite budget cuts in excess of 60 percent, the SouthCentral Foundation/Johnson-O'Malley Program has managed to operate on a skeleton crew. The educational summer sessions offered for children of varying ages are as follows: pre-school children ages 3-5, first session; elementary students ages 5-12, second and third session; and Jr. High

ing at spending one overnight event in each of last three sessions, maybe at Eklutna Lake."

This year's staff, as in the past years, are looking at teaching some important skills the participants can take home and use later in life.

"We want to focus especially on culture, safety and nutrition because we really need to, and we haven't paid (attention) to in the past," said Friemering. The camp teaches a lot

in such a little time, says Friemering. "I'm surprised with this year's group; they're remembering things, yet they're so young." Some of the highlights of this year's teaching include dental and eye care and hepatitis-B screening.

Elders are a big part of the teachings during every session. William Tyson, a Yup'ik Eskimo, held the attention of the children attending the first session for over 45 minutes last week (quite

Director, the current budget cuts are difficult to operate with. The program is accustomed to receiving \$200 per student, and now receives only half that amount.

A variety of activities will be presented this year including: Native Arts & Crafts, Native Dancing, Native Youth Olympics, camping, hikes, swimming, safety and much more.

For information call: 279-6461 or drop by the SouthCentral Founda-

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students ages 12-14, fourth session.

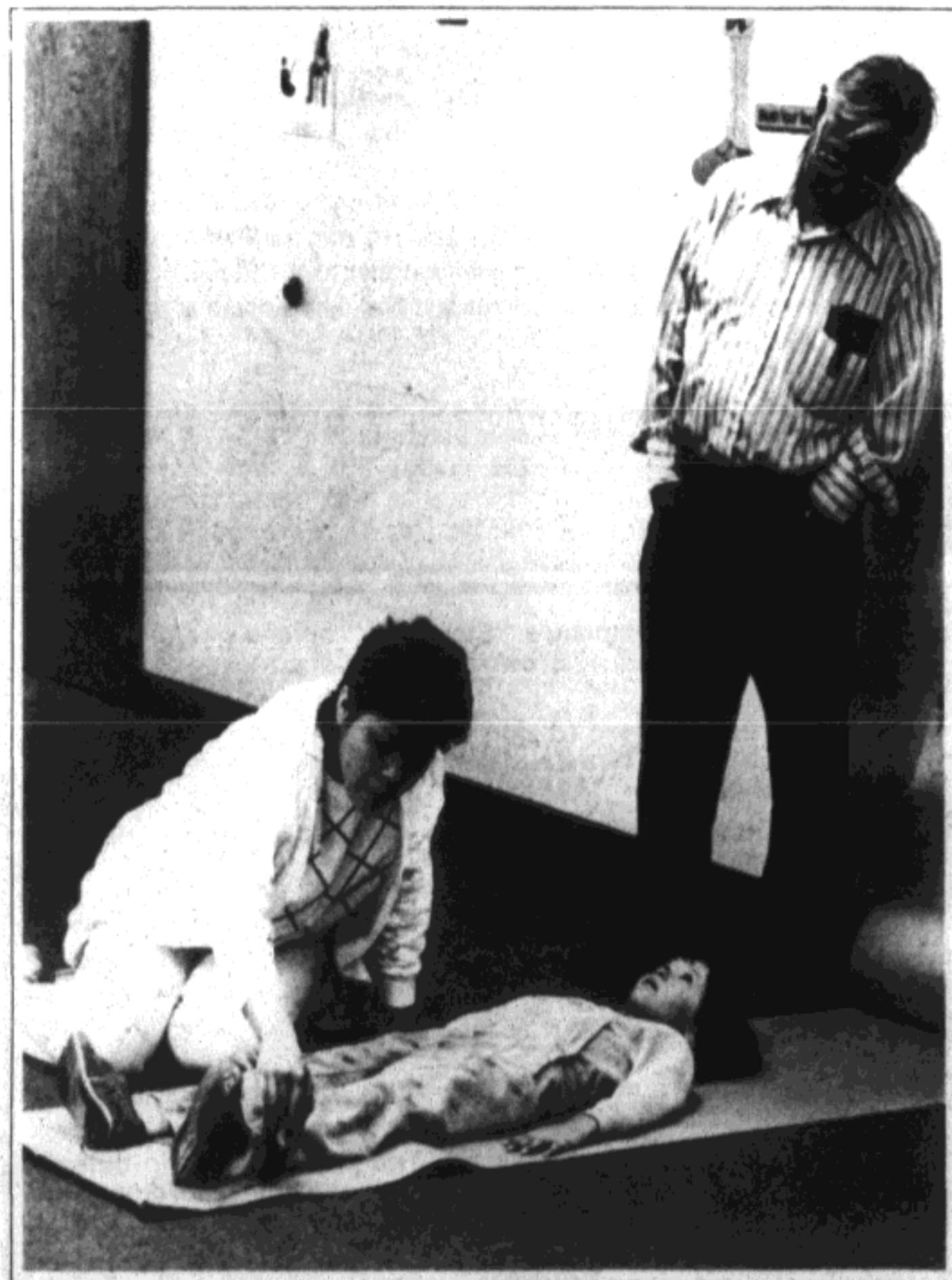
Peggy Friemering, this year's Student Counselor, has been with the Johnson-O'Malley Program working on various projects for the past four years.

This year Friemering has the three-year-olds in the first session and explains about the program.

"Applications are taken up until the starting day and even after that as long as there is room for them in the session. The sessions will continue up until the fourth of July and we're look-



Mr. William Tyson explains the importance of each, to what wildlife means to Alaska Natives. photo by Steve Kakaruk



Allison Dunegag here is getting her silhouette drawn on paper to cut out later. Hundreds of activities are scheduled for the summer camp. photo by Steve Kakaruk

an accomplishment). He was teaching traditional methods and the importance of pride in being an Alaska Native.

Though some of the children squirmed and jumped around, many listened intently as he spoke. "What is a moose good for?" asked Tyson.

"To eat," the group replied.

"Yes," Tyson answered, "you know why? Because only the Alaska Natives know how to take care of them and we eat them to stay healthy. The sportsman only wants to take the head and antlers. That's no way to hunt!"

Tyson continued teaching the importance of many other wildlife species, and how to live from the land.

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"Only the Alaska Natives know how to take care of them. Sportsman only wants to take the head..."



Budget cuts have forced programs like this SCF/JOM "Summer Safety and Culture Camp" to cut staff completely, so that children and students can enjoy summer. photo by Steve Kakaruk