

Editorial



Bean's Cafe deserves support

Bean's Cafe served an average of 646 meals a day last year, a 59 percent increase in service over 1988, according to Bean's.

The figures hardly tell the story of human need for shelter during the day and a warm meal, but that need is growing in Anchorage and Alaska. In fact, the increase in meals comes partly from the fact that Bean's began providing a hot soup or stew to needy overnight patrons at the Brother Francis Shelter.

Besides basic nourishment, Bean's is a place for the homeless to drop in and socialize.

Many of the patrons avoid institutional care only because of Bean's. They are unable to function much beyond going to the cafe for meals, but because Bean's is there, they do have somewhere to go.

More than half — 60 percent — of the cafe patrons are Alaska Natives.

Operating funds for this vital service come from United Way, gifts from private citizens, churches, businesses and groups and a municipal social services grant.

Friday marks the beginning of the 1990 Bean-A-Fit, the third year for Bean's to raise money by asking for support through a number of activities, which wind up Feb. 11.

The kickoff is Friday night at Bean's Cafe from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. It will be the first ever "Bean Soup Cook-off," giving chefs and aspiring chefs the opportunity to bring their own favorite Bean Soup creation for a community sampling of what can be done with a bean.

Guests will cast a ballot for their favorite, and three finalists will be selected by popular vote. Cash prizes of \$100 will be awarded to the finalists, and the grand prize winner will be named the author of the 1991 Bean-A-Fit soup.

Tickets for the event, which also features salad, dessert and a Dixieland Band, will be a donation of \$10 per person.

In addition, people are being asked to host a supper in their homes. The basic idea is to have 10 people over for Bean's Soup, asking them to contribute to Bean's Cafe.

Churches are being asked to designate this Sunday or next Sunday as Beans' Soup Sunday. And businesses and organizations are asked to gather with fellow employees to share a meal and request a donation to the cafe.

Anyone who wants to help out in any way may call a Bean's volunteer at the Arctic Gymnastics Center, 563-3330.