

# Forum on family survival May 29 at Alaskaland

By MARGIE BAUMAN

**FAIRBANKS** — Needs for local day care and the importance of the nuclear family will be discussed at a day-long forum on family survival May 29 at Alaskaland in Fairbanks.

Organizers of the forum, backed in part by the Alaska Humanities Forum, say people in decision-making positions often don't experience day care problems themselves and so are unaware of the urgency of the matter.

Armed with dramatic skits and discussion groups, they hope to bring together the decision makers with those in need of help, to begin to stem the rising tide of family problems in the Fairbanks area.

The tentative agenda includes several hours set aside for short dramas at the Alaskaland civic center theater, with children helping to choose subjects for the drama. Following each skit, forum participants will discuss issues which emerge.

Box lunches and dinner will be available to forum participants at no cost and organizers of the forum are hoping to include Native foods in the evening meal. Funds are being sought to purchase Native foods and persons interested in selling may contact Lyric Ozvurn of the Fairbanks Native Community Center.

A community forum on growth held last April at Fairbanks revealed great concern over the impact of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline construction on Fairbanks families.

Forum organizers say specific questions of child care and the larger question of family survival are seldom addressed by official decision-makers. "Construction of the oil pipeline across Alaska is called the most expensive private construction project in the history of the world," they said in summary. "We Fairbanksans need to get together and talk about whether our community and our families can afford the price."

At a planning session for the forum Friday, participants commented several times on what they felt was the insensitivity of various officials to day care needs. One said she inquired of Alyeska's office in Fairbanks on the number of employees who might be interested in day care and was told no such need existed, to their knowledge.

Yet the need is quite real to many area parents, including those working long hours or at remote construction camps for the pipeline.

"Traditionally, in other societies and formerly in our own, family integrity has been able to survive most separations, whether they be due to illness or trips to the store or to fish camps," forum organizers said. "Traditionally, other concerned adults, familiar to the children, have been standing by, ready to step in for an absent parent. Many Fairbanks parents have no such under-

The group said Native villages, with extended families to help care for children, were an example Fairbanks might like to consider following.

During World War II, families living near military bases often invited servicemen for dinner, not just to be supportive but because they found the servicemen to be interesting, helpful people, said Mary Afcan, one of the organizers. "They were fun, interesting — and they helped with the kids."

The extended family idea worked for them and Afcan, with the other organizers think it's an idea to consider in helping resolve this city's mounting family ills.

Persons interested in participating in the forum or helping to plan it may contact Afcan at 479-6073; Niilo Koponen, president of the Community Child Care Council, at 452-4251, or Jo Kuykendall, vice president, at 456-7887.