Honga: the leader, v. 04, no. 10

American Indian Center of Omaha, Inc.

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Dear Community,

OCTOBER has come with a touch of golden autumn in the air!

Our RENOVATION PROJECT is nearing completion, and we can thank the staff, especially our SEDS people, and of course the CITY CETA workers, for doing a very fine job in bringing our facilities up to standards. The business community who gave cash donations, equipment, supplies and materials will be recognized at the OPEN HOUSE ceremonies to be held at the AICO on November 21. Let me say that if it were not for all these kind people working together in brotherhood, the renovation project would not have been possible. I would like to name all the people involved, but space will not permit it. All the same, we are indeed grateful for all the help and support we have received.

Our SEDS Director, Brian Victoria, has received official communication from the PETER KIEWIT FOUNDATION that its Board of Directors has approved a challenge grant of $62,500 to be matched by additional community support. We have heard from the UNION PACIFIC FOUNDATION confirming receipt of our grant application; their letter sounded encouraging. These grants will be used to purchase the facilities we now rent along with the warehouse, manufacturing area and storefront space presently occupied by the Midwest Mattress Factory.

Spelled out in more detail is information on our OPEN HOUSE to be held NOVEMBER 21 (see page 5). We would like to see as many of our Indian people from far and wide in attendance if at all possible. We take this opportunity to personally invite you to our special day of celebration.

Our staff will host a HALLOWEEN PARTY for the youngsters on Friday, October 30 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at the AICO. Parents are encouraged to accompany their children. There are many exciting events taking place this month; please see the calendar for details.

Concerning our FINANCES, the future looks promising for the continuation of our existing programs in spite of the federal cutbacks being initiated by President Reagan and supported by the Congress. With the support of our own ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT efforts, we look optimistically toward a fruitful year for our Indian people.

We sincerely regret one loss. NATE PARKER, our Alcoholism Program Director, has accepted the directorship of the "Indian Desk" under the State Alcoholism Department in Lincoln. It is always good to see one of our people advance to a higher status in his or her chosen profession. We wish him well. He did an outstanding job directing the program here and, in spite of a few unforeseeable setbacks due to the closing of the Community Plaza, Nate has been able to bring the program out of displacement. Furthermore, Nate has indicated that he will do all in his power for our program from his new vantage.

Currently, Marshall Pitchard is evaluating all programs and is providing each departmental staff member with technical training. Marshall will also provide our new Board of Directors with training sessions, and will further assist the Board, staff and community members in revising the Bylaws and Personnel Policies and Procedures. More on this later.

If YOU need to talk with me on any given matter, please don’t hesitate to call or come in and see me. I’ll be happy to talk and help in any way possible. Sincerely,

Wayne Tundall
 Acting Director

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AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER OF OMAHA, INC.
October, 1981
FRED LEROY, CETA Coordinator for the AICO, has organized GED classes which are currently being held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. For the next three months, at least, a stipend will be provided to clients who are in need of assistance for transportation and books.

The Center’s CETA Program has been in operation approximately seven months, and has seen many clients complete GED training and vocational education. Many have already been placed in the private business sector. We wish to congratulate these people.

**GED GRADUATES:**
- LAURA LAMERE
- CECILIA WHITEHORSE
- VIRGINIA SNOWBALL
- MERCEDES VALENZUALA
- ELLIOT EDUARD

**TRAINING GRADUATES:**
- MARY PRETENDSEAGLE
- TRUMAN WALKER
- BEVERLY LOVELL
- SYLVIA WOODHULL
- MARY ALICE BIGFIRE
- LAURA LAMERE
- REBECCA ELKSHOULDER
- FLOYD PILCHER
- MYRNA REVOWL
- EMMARINE GRANT

Due to the effects of the recent federal budget cuts, the Indian Center CETA program will see a reduction of its funding. This will cause the CETA program to put more emphasis on direct placement. As such, we will not be able to place clients in as many vocational training programs as we have in the past.

This is the time to look at the necessity of receiving your GENERAL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA as this, in turn, will help with your employment potential.

**AN INDIAN PRAYER . . . . **

O’ Great Spirit
Whose Voice I hear in the winds
Hear me! I am small and weak, I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength, but not greater than my brother but to fight my greatest enemy (myself).

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.

So be when life fades, as the fading sun, my spirit may come to you without shame.

Applications for Store Manager and Assistant of our new BRIGHT EYES TRADING POST are currently being accepted by the American Indian Center of Omaha through OCTOBER 30.

Job descriptions and applications will be at our reception desk, 613 South 16TH Street, or you may call 344-0111 for more information.
It is always a treat to visit 'Indian Country' especially when this includes a stop at the Cherokee Heritage Center located southeast of Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Located on 40 acres of land, Tsa-la-gi (as it is more popularly known) features an authentically recreated 17th century Cherokee Village, an 1800 seat amphitheater, and a museum.

Finally, in the Cherokee National Museum, both the ancient and contemporary heritage of the Cherokee people are depicted.

While Tsa-la-gi andOmaha land are very similar in concept, there are some basic differences: the Cherokee life was much different from that of the Plains, and Tsa-la-gi is not a dream—it is a functioning reality.

However, after seeing Tsa-la-gi in action, I am more than ever convinced that with hard work and close cooperation between Indian and non-Indian communities, Omahaland too can be a source of pride and revenue to the metropolitan Omaha Indian community.
**SPECIAL EVENTS**

The American Indian Center will hold its annual HALLOWEEN PARTY for our Indian children (ages 14 and under) on FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 from 2:00 to 5:00 PM at our main offices, 613 So. 16th Street.

PRIZES will be offered for best costume. Lots of candy and refreshments will be available.

COME & SEE THE CREATURE FEATURE FILM!!

And, if you need a ride, please call the Center at 344-0111. We will arrange transportation for you.

DON'T MISS IT!

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**THE TEEN CLUB IS ALSO HAVING ITS HALLOWEEN DANCE.** This will be held October 30 in the evening. Tom Harlan is making arrangements for a community hall and will contact you concerning the time and place.

DON'T MISS IT!

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**LEGEND OF BLACKBIRD HILL**
by Wayne Tyndall

On the Omaha Indian Reservation in northeastern Nebraska high above the great smoky waters (Missouri River) stands Blackbird Hill, a memorial to the famous Omaha Chief.

Blackbird Hill has stood as a sentinel for countless generations. Lewis and Clark, early European explorers, visited this site in 1804 and mentioned the burial mound of the famous chieftain, ruler of the Omaha Nation for more than forty years.

Among the Omahas the legend still lives of a woman ghost whose shrill cry echoes throughout the valley below Blackbird Hill on the night of October 17. Many Omahas of all ages gather on the lonely windswept hill at midnight to hear the cry in the wind of a lost soul. "Must she forever cry?" they ponder.

The legend says that a beautiful fair young maiden was given in marriage by her father as a status symbol to the old Chief Blackbird following age-old tribal custom; however, the maiden's heart belonged to a handsome young brave. In her dilemma, she jumped from a high cliff to the angry waters below, and a piercing cry marked her untimely death. It was believed by the old Omahas that not only did her soul traverse the Milky Way to the spirit world beyond, but also that her spirit would return to earth annually to reenact her death since she had left so unwillingly.

The legend continues, that upon hearing the death cry of the young maiden, the old Chief became remorseful over the tragedy. Feeling ashamed and guilty, he would not eat for many days at a time, although his other wives were there to console him. Finally, a little child carrying a cup of spring water was sent to him. The old Chief, upon seeing the child, drank from the cup, once again began to face reality, and continued his life anew.

DON'T FORGET!!!

GED CLASSES are being offered on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the AICO Classroom (second floor of Administrative offices).

MOVIE NIGHT for especially the Youth, has been set for MONDAYS in the AICO Classroom. The first film, A Man Called Horse, will be shown October 26 at 7:00 p.m. $1.50 Adults, $1.00 children.

AA MEETINGS have resumed--Fridays at 7:00 p.m. at the Center's downstairs conference room.
Regularly Scheduled:

MONDAYS 7:00 PM Films for Youth - AICO Classroom
TUESDAYS 6:00 PM Beading Classes for Youth - AICO Conference Room, Start Oct. 13  
6:00 PM Sewing Classes for Youth - AICO Sewing Room, Start Oct. 13  
7-9 PM GED Classes - AICO Classroom
WEDNESDAYS 7-9 PM GED Classes - AICO Classroom
THURSDAYS 6:00 PM Gym Night for Youth - Naval Reserve Gym, 30th & Laurel
FRIDAYS 7:00 PM Alcoholism Program AA Meetings - AICO Downstairs

BOARD MEETING
Thursday 7:00 PM OCTOBER 15 - AICO Board Room

TEEN DANCE
Friday Halloween Dance; Contact Tom Harlan for time and place (344-0111).

HALLOWEEN FUN FOR THE KIDS
Friday 2-5 PM AICO main offices, for children under 14. Prizes & Creature Feature film.
"This will be my final newsletter report on the American Indian Center Alcoholism Program. I have resigned my position as Program Director effective October 2, 1981 to accept a new position with the State of Nebraska. Though I will be leaving this program and agency, I am delighted and proud to have been an intimate part of it and feel that the confidence and growth of our unique alcoholism treatment services would not have become reality without the support and personal backing of our Board of Directors and Staff overall.

Very soon our Program will open two separate residential houses for our inpatient, outpatient and half-way house activities. The largest of the two houses will represent our main business office and will contain quarters for seven male clients seeking treatment and rehabilitation. The second residential setting will house some staff personnel, a full kitchen operation and complete living quarters for five female clients.

I am personally very satisfied to see us reopening a total treatment program for our Indian community. As many of you already know, this new setting will replace the facilities that were shut down at the Community Plaza for Human Resources. Inpatient and outpatient services will begin no later than November 1, 1981 and will be under the acting directorship of Elmer Necklace, presently our Head Counselor. Elmer has been with us for the past eighteen months and recently received his official counselor's certification with the State of Nebraska's Division on Alcohol and Drugs. I am confident that he will lead this program into further growth and development. Your support of his efforts will be much appreciated.

I would personally like to express my appreciation to each of you for your communication, input and support. I feel I have learned a great deal during the time spent as program director and remain deeply committed to helping our people.

My best wishes to each of you and your families. May you never give up your values, beliefs and principles, for too often as Indian people this is all we have.

Sincerely,

Nate J. Parker

ELMER NECKLACE reports that the AICO Alcoholism Program has applied for a special permit to upgrade facilities and operate a treatment center and half-way house in two separate locations. City and Fire Department inspections have indicated certain necessary renovations. These renovations will begin the third week of October if the Omaha City Planning Board, on October 14, approves the sites selected and the Program's general activities. The staff will then receive training on the new record-keeping system for the Indian Health Services, the program's new funding source. Treatment services are scheduled to begin on November 30.

The State of Nebraska has also expressed an interest in the AICO's special treatment for Indian persons, and have stated a willingness to help meet the program's financial requirements. The Center is, therefore, requesting $75,000 in block grant funds to set up and operate a shelter for adolescents (ages 6 to 13 or, perhaps, up to 18) whose parents are alcoholics or who, themselves, need treatment.

We know that you will support our efforts to help those who need this type of service.

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Please note that weekly AA meetings are being held every Friday, 7:00 p.m., in the downstairs meeting room of the AICO offices at 613 South 16th Street.

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