6-1-1981

Honga : the leader, v. 04, no. 06

American Indian Center of Omaha, Inc.

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DEAR INDIAN COMMUNITY,

As of today I have been appointed Acting Director of the American Indian Center of Omaha, Inc. I want to thank the Board of Directors for their trust in me, and I will give them my full support.

I want the Indian community to know that they are welcome to come to the Indian Center for the available services.

The American Indian Center of Omaha, Inc. is at a crucial point in time and it will take everyone working together to see that success is reached. The existing facility is being renovated, and plans for the new cultural center are becoming more of a reality as each day goes by. My hope is that we will all work towards accomplishing the goals that have been set before us.

This Center belongs to all of you. The Board of Directors is totally responsible for its maintenance, and I am fully dedicated to managing the day-to-day operations while in the capacity of acting director.

I appreciate all the support extended to me and will do all I can for all of you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Wayne Tyndall,
Acting Director

NEW ELECTION FORTHCOMING:

THE ELECTION FOR THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS HELD ON MAY 30, 1981, WAS DECLARED ILLEGAL BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND A NEW ELECTION WILL BE HELD AT A LATER DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED.

* * * * *

All of us at the American Indian Center congratulate MIKE BOYLE on his election to the mayoral seat of the City of Omaha, and further join in the celebrations that have ensued his successful candidacy.

We further thank his wife, Anne, for the sincere appreciation she expressed in her letter addressed to "Omaha Indians" for the victory shawl presented to her from our community on election night, May 12. Her letter reads as follows:

May 21, 1981

"Thank you very much for the beautiful victory shawl you presented to me on Election Night. I will always cherish it as it will bring back memories of a successful evening and hopefully the beginning of a successful four years in Omaha’s future.

Thank you again for your very thoughtful gift."

Sincerely,

[Signature]

June Boyle

End to follow up on the CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS. As you may already know, the following people represent you in their respective districts:

District 1 - David Stahmer
District 2 - Fred Conley
District 3 - Walter Calinger
District 4 - Steve Tomasek
District 5 - Gene Findlay
District 6 - Kelvin Tanner
 Much has been written about the disproportionate burden Native Americans will bear under President Reagan's proposed budget cuts—and rightly so. Despite his "promise" to spare the truly needy, Indian programs which serve some of the poorest people in this nation are being targeted for about ten times their fair share on a per capita basis. This was stated in a Native American Rights Fund (N.A.R.F.) position paper.

The "fair share" is calculated by comparing the total amount of the current federal funding to the proportion allocated to specific programs, such as those which serve Indian peoples, and the number of people served.

The Indian Law Support Center Reporter states that "Indian programs which account for only 0.4% of the total federal budget, would absorb nearly 3.0% of the national budget cut." For example, "Indian housing was singled out as the only public housing program to be terminated." Other targeted programs would be effected as follows:

- Housing: $782 million / 96% reduction
- Health Facilities: 36 million / 82% reduction
- Economic Development: 30 million / 82% reduction
- Jobs and Training: 113 million / 45% reduction
- Energy Resource Management: 8 million / 46% reduction
- Legal Services: 6 million / 100% elimination

It is interesting to note that the areas of Jobs & Training along with Energy Resource Management, that is, programs which would ultimately benefit the overall corporate economy (through increased revenues and energy savings, for instance) received less of a blow on the Administration's cutting board than areas which would truly meet the exigent requirements for subsistence (housing, for instance), which are the primary concerns of the poor and truly needy.

The controversy continues -- WHO DISCOVERED AMERICA? Most of the scholars writing history these days continue to maintain that, while Indian people were here before Europeans, the misnamed Native Americans were, in the first place, also immigrants from other parts.

In the May 1981 newsletter we received from the American Indian Community Center in Des Moines, Iowa, Mr. Vernon Miller, staff person, reviewed a book by John Karras entitled Through Thin and Thin stating that "though I was impressed with some of his articles, there was one article that just turned me off towards him and his book."

The article was, according to the review, one of those that would classify the Oma-hans, the Sioux, the Ponca and all other nations in with the Polish, the Germans, the Italians and the rest of the European settlers. Mr. Miller quotes from the book which states, "there is an awful lot of soft-headed balderdash written about Indians in recent years, the burden of which is that the Indians owned this country. Not so." This prompted a rebuttal from the Des Moines Center which, in turn, received a reply back from John Karras. One paragraph from the letter, a copy of which was reprinted in its entirety in the Center's newsletter, reads:

"The best scientific evidence available has the ancestors of the American Indians entering the continent on the land bridge across the Bering Straits. I believe that. And if that is true, the ancestors of the Indians migrated here just as my ancestors migrated here."

We can easily pool the information we want and need to support a cherished belief: but there is other "scientific evidence." Archeologists as far back as Louis S. B. Leaky discovered evidence of humans dated around 12,000 years ago; some archeologists feel these ancestors go back as far as 100,000 years.

A recent article in the Omaha World-Herald reports that current archeological findings produce evidence that "man did not come to North America from Asia via the Bering Straits about 12,000 years ago as it is commonly believed. Instead he went the other way about 70,000 years ago, making North America the wellspring of modern man and Europe a kind of Palaeolithie backwater." This was reported by Ronald Yates in his review of the anthropologist Jeffrey Goodman's book, American Genesis, a new source of reference, research and refinement of heretofore standard theories on the origin of Cro-Magnon man. Goodman would have us "reshape our thinking about the origins of modern man because what we're finding here in Southern California and North America is evidence that destroys the old idea that ancient Mesopotamia was the cradle of modern man."

As can be expected, the work is apparently praised by some and condemned by others. One supporter, Professor Irvin Williams of Eastern Michigan, states that "the present paper probably puts on the position of view. The is no evidence that man first immigrated to North America via the Bering Straits."

The controversy continues.
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

The Center, located at 3022 N. 24th, is run by HELEN NIATT, a Lakota Indian from South Dakota. Helen grew up in Norfolk, Nebraska and is currently working with the Goodrich Scholarship Program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in addition to acting as Executive Director of the Law Center.

Helen stated that the purpose of the Center is to provide legal assistance and advice to individuals who feel they have been abused by police conduct. "It is also to educate and inform the general public as to what rights they have concerning police conduct." Helen states that, furthermore, the Center exists to maintain accurate data on information concerning violations of ethical police conduct. To date, no such information is available from the citizen's standpoint."

Professional consultants and attorneys have made time available to the Public Interest Law Center. You may call their 24-hour hot line, 423-9676, if you need their help.

***

Did you read about Karen Means visit to Omaha last month's HONGA? If so, you know she has been active in organizing a women's group called A.R.N.—Women of All Red Nations.

Recently she has inspired the formation of an Indian women's group in Omaha who, like A.R.N., are concerned with the survival of the family.

About 25 Indian women meet every other Monday round 7:00 p.m. in Mary Alice Bigfire's home at 309 Ames. Meetings in June are on the 1st, 15th and 29th. Pearl Bigfire has been coordinating much of the activity and can be reached at 455-495 for additional information.

The women have decided to form special interest education study cores designed to research into issues that relate especially to social welfare and education, the information which is then shared with the group as a whole. In addition to her effort, the women have formed a swap bank whereby goods and labor are comparably exchanged between households. Common requests are for carpentry, babysitting, plumbing and general home repairs. Susan Russell has been acting as the reference person and can be reached at 453-2781.

Pearl states that — EVERYONE'S WELCOME!

***

The NEBRASKANS FOR PEACE have recently indicated they are behind the SIOUX INDIANS who have been involved in a major effort to reclaim 800 acres of Great Service Land in the Black Hills.

The proposal was reported on May 7th that

The fifth annual conference of the NATIONAL URBAN INDIAN COUNCIL was held May 19-21 in San Diego, California. Logan Fontenelle, Vice Chairman of the AICO Board and Fred LeRoy, CETA Coordinator on the AICO staff attended the conference at the Center's representatives.

There were about 150 persons from around the country gathered at this conference to discuss President Reagan's budget cuts and resulting effects on Indian programs. The primary speaker, A. David Lester, ANA Commissioner, once again emphasized self-sufficiency for the Indian.

Fred LeRoy stated that the meetings were "very informative and served to enhance our own vision of economic independence."

***

Mr. Dick Mueller, Production Manager for the Firehouse Dinner Theater, has informed us that HENRY O'BRIEN, a Winnebago Indian, has been cast in the part of Chief Bromden for the play, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

According to Mr. Mueller, the Chief "is a more imposing figure than in the movie version" as the part in the play requires extensive monologues.

Mr. O'Brien, from the Black River Falls in Wisconsin, has acted in several movies, including The Professions, A Man Called Horse and Tom Sawyer. He has also held several roles in television serials and movies including parts in Benazia and Laredo.

The play at the dinner theater will open June 30. We hope to be able to interview Henry O'Brien prior to that time.

***

The MISS INDIAN AMERICA PAGEANT has sent us an application for a woman who might be interested and qualified to enter the pageant. We would like to pass this information on to our community's young Indian women who might be interested.

***

Someone was helped, and we here at AICO thank the Omaha Firefighters Union who donated $250 to help Janice Webster of our Indian community 'get back on her feet' after a fire swept through her apartment on May 11. According to an article in the Omaha World-Herald on the 21st of May, "Mrs. Webster said that the money will be used to pay a month's rent and to buy a chest for the children's clothing and for draperies, among other things."

We trust everything is going well for Janice.

***

According to a May 20 Press Release from the Department of the Interior, Kenneth L. Smith, a Mosco Indian from Oregon, has been sworn in by Interior Secretary James Watt as the Department's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

In addition, — BLICKENSPREGER"
n the United States nearly 95 million on, women and youth from all walks of life and nationalities are using alcoholic beverages. Most have learned to handle these beverages without ill effects; however, there are roughly 9 million problem drinkers and alcoholics in need of treatment. These 9 million problem drinkers and alcoholics touch the lives of nearly 40 million other people, many of whom are children.

The evidence is overwhelming on how alcohol alone continues to damage individuals and families in both Indian and nondiandian society.

Problem drinking and alcoholism knows no social or economic barriers, and the American Center Alcoholism Program is only one of any service TOPIC the country, designed to be in the 'help' process for those persons who are determined to stop alcohol from controlling their lives. Through the type of intervention, treatment and halfway house services offered through our program, our Indian clients are provided the necessary guides and incentives to make positive changes and adjustments in their lives. One such case reflects the determination of a female client and mother of several young children. This single parent was faced with many problems which stimulated her drinking. Though she initially succumbed to the effects of alcohol, she never lost sight of her love for her children and the integrity that she always wanted to achieve as a person. With these personal priorities within her, this client began to actively participate in a sixty-day treatment program designed to counter her problem drinking dilemmas. As an inpatient, she was exposed daily to the effects of alcohol and with added therapeutic support given by her assigned counselor through scheduled one-on-one sessions conducted privately, she began to move more successfully into the community.

This client then, through coordination with our CETA program, entered into educational training and within a six-week period of time was not only able to complete her GED but also to save the majority of her training stipend money which could then be used for relocation into her own apartment. Throughout the ninety-day stay with our program, the counselors, in cooperation with the Douglas County Social Services, made arrangements for both child care and periodic child visitations while the mother participated in our treatment Center and halfway house program. The case reflected in this article demonstrates clearly that with hope, desire, and commitment, there is help -- answers to life other than alcohol.

Our finances are available to both men and women who are 18 years of age or above, feel they are unable to control their drinking. Our 613 So.

CETA DEPARTMENT REPORT

Our Center's CETA Training Program has placed 27 clients whose February, and there are still openings for interested persons. If you meet the requirements and would like to get started on some type of vocational education, contact Coni Walker, Intake Worker, or Fred Lessley, Program Coordinator, at 344-0111. The basic requirements are:

- you must presently be unemployed,
- must meet certain income requirements,
- must not have been in CETA for the past year,
- must have a social security card.

Fred says that "the best thing to do, especially if you want the 'whole scoop' is to stop in at the offices on 613 So., 16th St. between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon, Mondays through Fridays." The 'whole scoop' includes counseling to find out what you are really interested in doing besides advice on the current employment situation.

Some of the programs that are opening include:

SHEET METAL APPRENTICE (Omaha, Council Bluffs). The Training Committee is currently taking applications for construction sheet metal apprentices. They are also taking applications for persons interested in the basic training program.

The Omaha Board of Realtors has set up a scholarship to fund three minority persons through their 30-hour training program to help fulfill the educational requirements necessary for passing the Nebraska Real Estate Salesmanship examination for licensing. Basic qualifications are:

- 19 years of age
- Nebraska residency
- High school diploma or GED
- Able to subsist financially over a period of time (preferably before receipt of aid in training)
- Available transportation
- Be willing to exercise the option to enter the real estate business within six months.

Thoughts:

"Teach us to talk the soft earth,relative to all that live.

Sincerely, our heart

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Readers of the April ISSUE will remember that the SEDS Department submitted a grant proposal to the City of Omaha under its Community Development Action Grant Program, C.D.A.G. To the best of our knowledge, this was the first time the AICO has ever directly requested City money.

We are happy to announce that the five-person C.D.A.G. Neyoral Review committee has recommended that we be awarded the full $35,000 we requested. On June 2, the City Council will vote on this recommendation, and we are confident that this amount will be made available to us.

If we do receive this grant, we will begin almost immediately to expand and renovate our present facilities in order to, first of all, provide space for our new Youth, Development and Indian Child Welfare programs.

Beyond these necessities, we will be able to establish an Indian Elders Center, including a dining and lounge area, as well as an Indian arts and crafts store which we now call the Bright Eyes Boutique in honor of the famous 19th century Omaha Indian bead artist, also known as Sunclite Lafa-lesca (Laflesche meaning "The Arrow").

Articles sold in the arts and crafts store will be on a consignment basis. We invite our readers who do traditional arts and crafts work to be in touch with us, letting us know what articles they can make, in what quantity they can be produced and what price they would request so that they may be sold in the store. When an article is sold on a consignment basis, the price requested by the supplier is given to him or her upon conclusion of the sale with the balance going to support the general enterprise.

This will then be the only Indian-owned and operated business in the Omaha area, and we are determined to assure its contribution to the economic well-being of both the American Indian Center (thereby the Omaha Indian community as a whole) and the individual artists as well.

In other SEDS developments, the first meeting of the AICO Advisory Committee was held in the Indian Room of the U.S. National Bank on Friday May 29. This committee, comprised of 12 members from the metropolitan community, will aid the AICO in long-range planning and development, particularly with regard to the proposed construction of "Omaha Land," the prime purpose of which would be the American Indian cultural center.

We will tell you more about this and other activities in future newsletter issues. At present, we are in the final stages of negotiations for our proposed facility with the cultural center project, and we promise our next newsletter, this study should be well underway.

STAFF NEWS

WAYNE TYNDALL, an Omaha Indian, is back at the American Indian Center of Omaha, Inc. in the capacity of Administrative Assistant. He comes from the Omaha Indian reservation where he has been engaged in writing a manuscript on Ponca Chief Standing Bear.

Wayne was educated at Haskell Junior College where he majored in business administration. He served two enlistments in the U.S. Navy and has worked for the CIA both in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles. Later he worked for the Campbell Soup Company in Omaha. After that, he returned to the Omaha reservation where he served six years on the Omaha Tribal Council.

His own experience and interest has led him to become quite proficient in the history of the Omaha Tribe.

More recently he has worked as health planner for the Urban Indian Health Association, Inc., of Omaha and the past two years as the assistant director of the American Indian Center.

Wayne says, "I am glad to be back at the AICO and will do my part in making the program delivery service more attractive to our Indian community."

The AICO staff is happy to have Wayne back at work!

FRANCES BLACKBIRD (PARKER) from the Omaha Tribe started working for the Center on May 21 as Receptionist. She is active in the Title IV Indian Education Program and is a member of the Wahon thin gels, one of Omaha's Indian culture groups.

Frances has lived and worked in the Omaha area for the past 20 years. Besides her current employment and other activities, she is in licensed massage therapist.

In all welcome CLAUDETTE THOMAS, an Omaha Indian, who will be working with us here at the Center to help keep the place in top condition. Her housekeeping job will be in-resident important as we move into larger quarters.

Claudette was born in Winnebago and was raised at the Omaha reservation. She has lived in Omaha since the past 20 years where she raised her children with John, Lynette and Claudine.

* * * * *
BIRTHDAY GO ARD DANCE

for Sons Sam and Mike
Sponsored by Brenda Grant
Clifford Wolfe in Charge

June 13, 1981
Macy, Nebraska

Tai-Pah Host Dancers:

Head Staff:

Head Singer : Louis Sheridan, Omaha - Macy, Nebraska
Head Man Dancer : Elger Blackbird, Omaha - Macy, Nebraska
Head Lady Dancer : Mary Ann Snowball, Winnebago-Winnebago, Nebraska
Head Boy Dancer : Blaine Sheridan, Omaha - Macy, Nebraska
Head Girl Dancer : Lindsey Merrick, Omaha - Macy, Nebraska

Special Invitations to:

Orphan Aids Horsehead Lodge
Group 9 Sioux City Indian Club
Minute Women Lincoln Indian Club

Jim and Ellen Swope
will sponsor
an Appreciation Dinner
for being adopted into the Mose Hensley family
on
July 7, 1981
in Dodge Park at 6:00 p.m.
Everyone of the Indian community is invited to attend.
Please bring your chairs and dishes.

The AICO wishes to thank the Swope family for their generosity.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE, 1981

Every other Monday

The local chapter of W.A.R.N. meets at Mary Alice Bigfire's home, 7:00 p.m., 1309 Ames. Meetings in June are on the 1st, 15th and 29th. See HONGA's news article for additional information.

Every Tuesday

At 7:00 p.m., persons interested in Indian culture meet with the Wahcon thin ge's in AICO's conference room at the Administrative offices, 613 South 16th Street. Pot luck dinner is served.

The Urban Culture Club also meets Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in Joe Hollowell's home. They will be finalizing plans for their participation in the Ethnic Festival and will also be working on Powwow '81 which is to be held in September.

Every Friday

At 7:00 p.m. the Indian Alcoholism Program meets at the North Center, 4601 North 36th Street. Everyone is welcome! Call Nate Parker, Director, at 451-3714 for additional information.

June 6-7

Don't forget the ETHNIC FESTIVAL. The Urban Culture Club will have both an Arts & Crafts and a Food booth. Traditional singing and dancing is also planned.

June 1 - August 31

The Children's Museum of Omaha (551 South 18th Street) has developed an exhibit and program under the title of MASKS OF NATIVE AMERICA which will run from June 1 through August 31. Jamake Highwater, a prominent writer and historian especially in the fields of American Indian studies, will be giving a series of lectures on June 16 and 17. They include:

June 16

Native American Oral Tradition (especially for grades 1-3)
3:00 p.m. at the Children's Museum

June 16

The Primal Mind: Vision and Reality in Indian America (general public)
7:30 p.m. at the Peter Kiewit Conference Center, 1313 Farnam

June 17

Native American Oral Tradition (especially for grades 6-10)
1:00 p.m. at the Children's Museum

Duane Hutchinson, a native of the Nebraska sandhills, will also be sharing his "Ghost Stories of the Plains" on June 19 from 10:00-11:30 and 1:00-2:30 at the Museum.

There are many other workshops planned, especially for children of all grades.

You may call the Center at 344-0111 or the Omaha Children's Museum at 342-6163 for additional information.

UPCOMING:

July 4

The Dakota Dance Clan will hold its Annual Fourth of July Wacipi in Sisseton, South Dakota.

July 8-12

National Powwow V, an intertribal event, will be held in Topeka, Kansas at the Sunflower State Fairgrounds. There will be parades, 2 afternoon formal dances, craft contests and dance sessions. If you would like to participate, the AICO has registration forms. Also, you may call for additional information.

July 10-12


*****

WELCOME readers of the Honga. It is the goal of our newsletter to give a clear picture of all our activities and services as well as the issues that concern our general community. This calendar is to inform the American Indian Community of pertinent social, cultural, educational and political events. If your Native American organization would like to submit such information for publication, please call us at 344-0111.
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Ethnic Festival 1-9:30 PM

June 1981