

# Aurolyn Returns to Sheridan With Her Eye on Miss Indian America Title

Aurolyn Stwyer barely remembers her first trip to Sheridan, Wyoming for the All-Indian Days celebration. She was only four years old but according to her mother she had some pretty big ideas. Upon meeting Vivian Arviso, a Navajo girl who had just won the Miss Indian America 1962 title, Aurolyn looked up at her with obvious admiration and announced in her little voice, "When I grow up I'm going to be Miss Indian America."

Vivian patted her on the back and said, "You're very intelligent. I bet you'll do it." Fifteen years later Aurolyn is traveling to the Sheridan celebration again, this time as a poised young woman bearing the title of Miss Warm Springs. If the judges take her as seriously as Vivian did in 1962, Aurolyn just may come home as Miss Indian America 1977. As a contestant in the

annual contest, Aurolyn will face a dizzying schedule of appearances, including talent exhibitions, banquets, parades and a pageant. For five days beginning July 27 Aurolyn will be under the watchful and critical eyes of five panels of judges who will be evaluating among other things her talent, dress, poise, personality and concern for Indian people.

The new Miss Indian America will be chosen at the pageant July 31.

A caravan of Miss Warm Springs fans, friends and relatives will be leaving here Saturday, July 23 to lend their support in Aurolyn's bid for the title.

Aurolyn says she is looking forward to the Sheridan event, despite the rigors of preparation, traveling and participating. She has spent the last couple of weeks plowing

through a stack of forms that are far more impressive than college applications. The 19 year-old contestant was required to write a 300-word essay illustrating her concern for Indian people. Her topic: Getting more Indians into management positions.

On the lighter side, Aurolyn has been working with Eva Montee on a modern physical fitness routine that she will perform to the tune of the theme from "Rocky."

In addition to a modern talent demonstration, Aurolyn and the other contestants will display a traditional talent once every day. Aurolyn is practicing the Hoop Dance with Donny Winishut, which she plans to do with three hoops.

Fund raising has been another activity of Aurolyn and her friends. A recent auction in front of the Administration

Building netted over \$350 for the cause. The Tribal Council is assisting Aurolyn with her trip and the Stenopool is giving her lots of support.

Of course there is the daily business of being Miss Warm Springs, as well as a student, a volunteer and a youth program coordinator.

Aurolyn has been particularly busy representing Warm Springs in local functions in the last few months. Just last weekend her float won the Mayor's Trophy in the Ft. Dalles Day Parade in The Dalles. She also participated in the Crooked River Round-up Parade, the Warm Springs Fourth of July parade and she rode on the prize winning Warm Springs float in the Rose Parade in Portland. Her Lord's Prayer in Sign Language has become a popular part of local ceremonies.

"I'm constantly involved in something," Aurolyn says about her life as Miss Warm Springs. She is enjoying what she considers to be a new experience in public relations.

On top of it all, she has just finished her sophomore year at Portland State College where she is studying Business Administration.

Unable to resist new challenges, Aurolyn is also serving on the Urban Indian Programs Board and the Southeast Youth Council Board in Portland. She is the Assistant Program Coordinator for the Native American Youth Association, the only job for which she gets paid.

Seeking the Miss Indian America title is another kind of challenge for Aurolyn. Explaining why she would like to be Miss Indian America 1977, Aurolyn says, "It's a pretty good opportunity for personal growth and getting to take in all the other Indian cultures by traveling to Indian functions."

Miss Indian America receives invitations to attend conventions and powwows all over the nation during her term.

Warm Springs wishes Aurolyn good luck in her pursuit of the title which a confident four year old predicted she would one day fill.



Miss Warm Springs Aurolyn Stwyer is off to Sheridan, Wyoming to compete for the honor of Miss Indian America 1977. Her ready smile, shown here at the Warm Springs Fourth of July Parade, should catch the judges' eyes.

(Sandy Rangila Photo)

## Sacred Dance Revealed

by Roger Stwyer

A sacred cougar dance, not performed in over 25 years, was revealed Thursday, July 7, at the Agency Longhouse. According to Nelson Wallulatum, chief of the Wasco band, "The Boy Scouts did it (the dance) over 25 years ago, but it was never done in the longhouse for over 50 years." He also said, "Sanders Heath, a Boy Scout himself back then told me he didn't remember the dance, he remembered seeing the skins, but not the dance."

When asked why he brought such a dance out, he replied, "There's nothing to why, it just laid dormant for so long that we just brought it out so the children could remember. I guess the main purpose was teaching."

He said another reason for doing the dance was to show the children "there is something else besides Pow-wows." Nelson recalled days when dancing was an Indian custom. But now, he says, "Pow-wows don't mean a thing, it isn't an Indian custom anymore, they (the dancers) don't know a thing about their tribal customs."

The dance itself proved to be a real crowd pleaser, although Nelson and Herb Stwyer Sr. had to teach the inexperienced dancers how to do the dance just minutes before the dance started. Incidentally,

the ones who performed the cougar dance were: Hank Palmer, Richard Tohet, Roger Stwyer, and Tommy Kalama. The bear was Narvel Tufti.

According to Verbena Greene, "This dance is supposed to be a fun dance." Nelson explained this further when he showed the dancers the dance. "When he (Herb Stwyer, drummer) beats the drum fast, crawl on your hands and knees and fight, paw one another and hiss at each other, but when he slows the beat, stand up dance." One spectator thought it was funny because he never saw such a dance done before. Nelson pointed out another thing, "The song was Wasco-pum, the dance was Tenino."

Another important role in the dance was that of the trainers. They were Silas and Prosanna Williams. An interesting thing was that Prosanna used her kindness to gentle the cougars and keep them from fighting, but Silas carried a long willow whip to tame them. The only one to obey the trainers was the bear (Narvel Tufti) because every time he got whipped he rolled over.

Following the cougar dance, a series of Wasco dances was put on by the family of Nelson. Then Nelson, Ada Sooksoit, and Lizzie Rhoan put on an exhibition (fancy) skip dance, a dance similar to the fancy war dance.



"When I grow up I'm going to be Miss Indian America." Four year old Aurolyn Stwyer advised Miss Indian America 1962 Vivian Arviso of her plans when she visited Sheridan All-Indian Days fifteen years ago. Her mother Neda listened with amusement and her brother Roger had other things on his mind, but both will cheer her on this week as Aurolyn makes a serious bid for the 1977 title.

Photo supplied by Neda Greene



In a revival of sacred and social Wasco Wallulatum arranged for the demonstration dances, Lovina Sargent and Tommy Kalama hustle through an arch of arms and feathers in the Grand March or Buck Dance. Chief Nelson

CDS Photo