

# NAIWA NATIONAL PRESIDENT HAS HEART AND MIND AT THE HELM



**PRESIDENTIAL VISIT** - Hildreth Venegas, national president of the North American Indian Women's Association, chatted with Orthelia Miller, treasurer of the Oregon chapter during her visit to Warm Springs in March. CDS Photo.

By Cynthia Stowell

With "quiet dignity" and a sharp mind for administration, Hildreth Venegas steers the North American Indian Women's Association from her bedroom office in Sisseton, South Dakota. Obviously proud to represent Indian women, Venegas is covering many miles and talking herself hoarse in her attempt to strengthen NAIWA from within and establish its credibility from without.

Venegas presided over the NAIWA National Conference in Phoenix June 21-25 where nearly 400 Indian women gathered to hear the remarks of such illustrious guests as Veronica Murock (President of the National Congress of American Indians) and Forrest Gerard (Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs.)

The national president, who is a Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux, also made Warm Springs part of her itinerary last March, offering encouragement to the newly organized local and state chapters at a statewide meeting held at Kah-Nee-Ta.

Upon meeting Indian women at conferences and on their home turf, Venegas feels she has already known them. A bond

exists, a familiarity, that makes even first-time gatherings like "class reunions."

"I have met some beautiful, beautiful women," remarked Venegas. "There is something very special about Indian women. They have an inward beauty that radiates."

Embracing the "sisterly" quality of NAIWA and proud to see Indian women working together and becoming more confident, Venegas avoids feminist politics.

"We are not concerned with political power or headlines," she insisted. NAIWA does not take stands on issues such as the Equal Rights Amendment. Instead the national organization addresses itself to such basic needs as the improvement of health and education among children, women and families.

For instance last year's national projects focused on the special needs of handicapped Indian children and children in foster homes and Indian schools, as well as the problems of Indian women, including rape and abuse.

Contracting with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, NAIWA volunteers have researched these

problem areas and are presenting recommendation-filled final reports to Forrest Gerard, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs.

Such efforts are difficult without funding, admitted Venegas. Part of her mission as president is to locate funds for meetings, mailings, printing and training. Proposals have been made to two national religious organizations and meanwhile Venegas is deftly cutting corners.

Much of the extra data collected for past projects can be used for future study of health problems and Venegas is looking to the Indian Health Service for assistance.

Venegas would also like to see NAIWA reorganize to facilitate funding as well as communication. The officers and directors are scattered throughout six regions and headquarters move from one bedroom to another as the two-year presidency rotates by region.

For Venegas, being president of NAIWA is a second job. She also lives a full life as the director of a 32-bed I.H.S. hospital in South Dakota. But taking on the NAIWA national office has been just one more way of realizing her lifelong ambition. "I have spent my lifetime trying to improve relations between the Indian and non-Indian."

NAIWA has gained national recognition and credibility since 68 women discovered the "bond" at the 1970 Conference of the Country Women's Council at Colorado State University. Closing the circle, a former President of the Country Women's Council accepted an invitation from NAIWA to speak at their national conference in Phoenix last month.

Venegas encourages the understanding and involvement of NAIWA members' husbands and families, too. As she pointed out, "If I didn't have the interest, confidence and love of my husband I couldn't do what I do."

It is with her brand of "quiet dignity and pride" that the pledge in NAIWA's constitutional preamble is carried out — "to promote through unity of purpose the general well-being of Indian people."

# N.A.I.W.A. NATIONAL CONFERENCE

"The International Year of the Child" was chosen as the 1979 theme for the North American Indian Women's Association at their annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona June 21-24.

Seven women from Warm Springs attended the conference, Agnes Nathan, Jeannie Danzuka, Celeste Smith, Rosella Phillips, Redine Calica, Orthelia Miller and Marie Calica. The four-day conference had an estimated 380 registered guests in attendance.

Hildreth Venegas, NAIWA national president from Sisseton, South Dakota presided over the four-day conference.

One of the important issues discussed were twelve resolu-

tions, which are now pending, waiting to be voted on. The local chapter from Warm Springs submitted one resolution which is also pending.

Elected to the position of National Director of Indian Culture was Delores George who is from the Yakima, Washington chapter. Ms. George was voted in by and will represent the Northwest area on the National level.

The 9th annual (1979) national conference will be held June, 1979 in Yakima, Washington.

The next local NAIWA meeting will be Tuesday July 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

# CREEPY CREATURES

Nobody likes those creepy, crawly earwigs that lie under damp washclothes and sneak in with the laundry, but during the summer months their presence can most always be expected.

The earwig, which is reddish-brown in color and about three-quarters of an inch long, has curved forceps at the rear of the body. The earwig will try to pinch with his forceps, only to leave a harmless stinging sensation. Earwigs often infest flowers such as dahlias, roses and other large-blossomed flowers.

In the Willamette Valley, damp rainy spring weather keeps the earwig population at a low level. But here in Central Oregon, a damp atmosphere only increases the chance for the earwig's survival.

Natural control of earwigs, such as clearing away trash, tin cans, old boards and grass

clippings, is a slow way to be partially rid of earwigs. There are also natural predators, but they can't be depended upon.

Artificial control, such as using malathion dust or spray or a general household insect spray will kill most earwigs on contact. Spraying and dusting with poisons can be very dangerous for adults, children and animals, so must be handled with great care.

OSU Extension Agent Clint Jacks has not noted a particular increase in this year's earwig population, but he has noticed there are many more species of insects and, in addition, many more wild animals such as coyotes and rattlesnakes.

So, if folks are not dodging earwigs this summer, they'll probably be side-stepping side-winders.

# WARM SPRINGS LIONS CLUB

New officers will be installed July 25 at 7 a.m., the place Alice's Restaurant. Taking office as President-Charles Nathan; first Vice President-James Cornett; Secretary - Ken Goddard, and Treasurer - Francis Atkinson (Re-elect).

Installation ceremony will be handled by Jay Binder and George Smith, both members of

the Madras Lions Club. These two gentlemen played an important role in helping organize the Warm Springs Lions Club. New officers will serve from July 1, to June 30, 1979.

Another reminder to all members, all dues should be paid, both past and present, and also do attend the meetings and help our organization help the community.

# Spilyay Tymoo

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**FRESH SALMON** - The salmon practically leaped out of the Columbia River onto people's plates at the annual salmon bake at Indian Reserve Park in Cascade Locks July 9. The dinner was not well attended, with not even half the expected 1500 lining up for salmon, corn, fried bread and watermelon. Jeannie Danzuka (right) and Jane Charley served up Amos Queahpama and Herb Stwyer, wondering how they ended up cooking when it was to be an all-male crew. Fish was provided by Harold Green and his outfit. CDS Photo