

Alcohol program employees participate in training

by Cynthia Stowell

Traditional prayer opened a month of intensive training for staff of the tribal alcohol and drug program, temporarily closing the treatment residence to new clients.

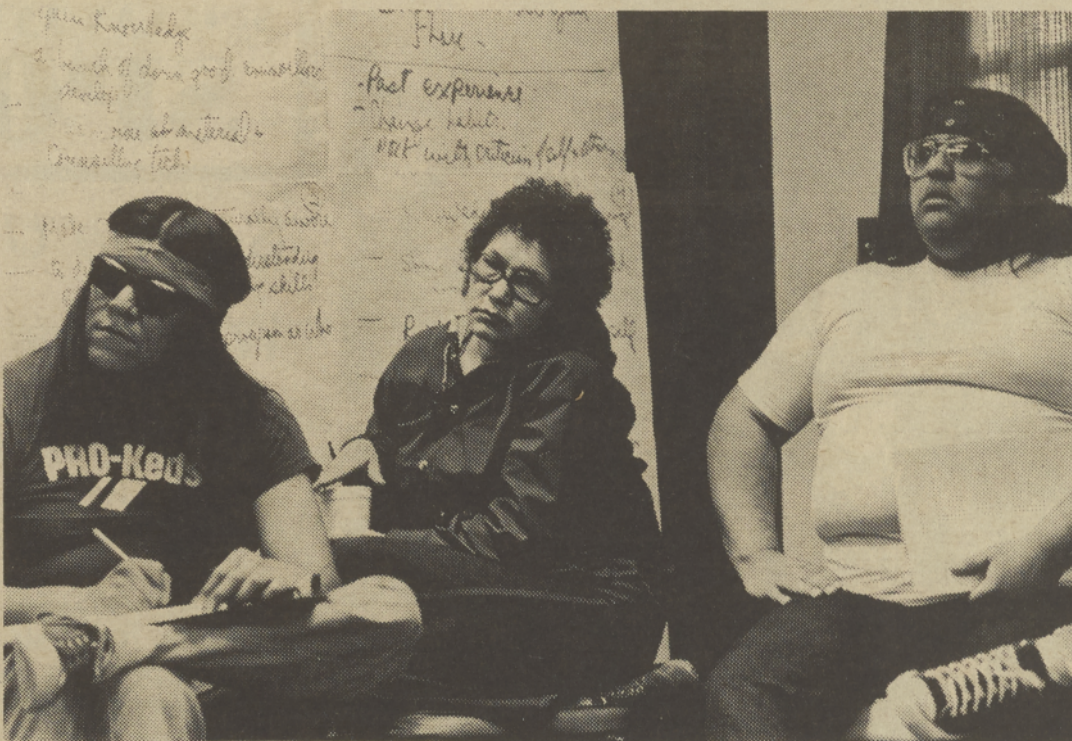
Prosanna Williams prayed for strength for the 30 staff members at the first training session November 1. By the end of 20 workdays the confidence and academic foundation of the mostly Indian staff should be greatly improved, said program director Steve Bekofsky.

Three of the four current residents of the treatment center have agreed to extend their 90-day commitments so they can join their counselors in the group-oriented training. A number of patients have gone directly from treatment into staff positions, said Bekofsky.

New patients, most of whom are mandated to the residence by Tribal Court, are being referred this month primarily to the Comp-Care Unit in Redmond and secondarily to Portland's Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA) and Sweatshop Lodge in Monmouth. Costs will be reimbursed by the Indian Health Service.

Outpatient services of the Tribes' six-year-old alcohol and drug program will continue uninterrupted, with emergency assistance from other programs in the health and social services branch. Last year the alcohol and drug program served 568 "substance abusers" from this reservation and elsewhere.

The special training for staff members-whom Bekofsky selects for their "Motivation, enthusiasm and experience" but not necessarily for their



Concentrating—Walt Quinn, Pat Leno and Joe Strikes the Heart along with nearly 30 other Drug and Alcohol Abuse staff members have been participating in a month-long training program. Some residents of the treatment center are participating as well. Two-thirds of the training will be facilitated by local resource people and will cost under \$1,000.

Photo courtesy of Cynthia Stowell

formal training-is based on "the assumption that people have the answers but don't know how to get them out," said the director.

The first day of "structured sharing" had staffers discussing the leading causes of alcoholism in "Indian country" and drawing pictures of the Indian in today's world. Many drawings showed a man with braided hair carrying a bottle, torn between the religion and culture of the traditional world and the money, cars and rush of the modern world.

Much of the training will center on the "unique things about Indian alcoholism," said Bekofsky, who pointed to

statistics that illustrate the seriousness of the problem among American Indians. For instance, according to a 1978 report of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, alcohol-related mortalities among American Indians and Alaskan Natives age 15-24 years is 11.1 per 100,000, 22.2 times the national average.

The Warm Springs community has been shown to have a "natural care system" for dealing with its ailing members without agency intervention. The tribal alcohol program hopes in the next month to find ways to coordinate with this traditional

extended-family care.

Staff will also complete such conventional training as Alcohol 101, a state-approved course in alcohol education. They will undergo group therapy three times a week and critique each other's counseling methods.

Recognizing the importance of community support and involvement, the program has planned a two-day session November 20-21 on the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome for the public, while a "concerned older person" has been invited to share in the training on an ongoing basis, said the

director. The alcohol program's basic treatment philosophy "to assist the person in making his own decision about whether he wants to drink or not"—should be reinforced, not changed, in the next month, said Bekofsky.

In the past, patients have become too dependent on counselors, said treatment supervisor Bob Parker. A high rate of client return and staff turnover has been a continual problem.

Program supervisors hope the participatory training will build teamwork and improve communication among staff, who have tended to function on separate "turfs."

"We're all pulling, but not at the same time," said Parker. An interesting by-product of the "confluent"-style training will be a glossary of "buzz words"—vocabulary used by staff members that other staff don't understand.

Parker and Bekofsky predict that the training, about two-thirds of which will be facilitated by local resource people, will cost under \$1,000. "Thirty people for twenty days for \$1,000 I challenge anyone to beat that," said Bekofsky.

The Tribes spend over \$300,000 annually on their alcohol and drug program, with some matching funds from the National Indian Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. The National Institute on Drug Abuse and Oregon's Liquor tax law.

"A lot of people see Indians with alcohol problems but don't realize that Warm Springs is doing anything about them," commented Bekofsky.

More Indian News Notes

'PREVENTABLE' DAM BREAK LOOSES RADIO-ACTIVE MATERIALS ON NAVAJO LANDS:

An estimated 93 million gallons of radio active, contaminated water was released on Navajo Indian lands by a dam break that had been predicted several years ago and was described as "easily preventable" at a Congressional oversight hearing October 22. The polluted materials spread almost 100 miles down stream from the Church Rock, New Mexico dam.

Representative Morris Udall, chairman of the House Interior Committee said that at least three federal and state regulatory agencies had "ample opportunity" to conclude that such an accident would happen. Navajo Tribal Vice Chairman Frank E. Paul told the Committee that the Navajos are skeptical about health assurances they have received. He said that the industry policies that permit their land to be polluted and their lives threatened.

Another witness, William P. Robinson, of the Southwest Research and Information Center at Albuquerque said there were more United Nuclear employees in this room today than there were on the cleanup during the first month at Church Rock. He said the company assigned only a handful of workers to the cleanup. The accident happened July 16.

CHEROKEES WILL SUE TO STOP TELlico DAM AFTER SNAIL DARTER FAILS:

The Eastern Band of Cherokees in western North Carolina voted October 9 to file suit to stop the Tennessee Valley Authority from completing the Tellico Dam and flooding their ancestors' burial grounds. Construction of the \$130 million dam 25 miles southwest of Knoxville, Tennessee, already 95 percent complete, was halted in January 1977 when a federal court ruled that the 16,000 acre lake it would create would destroy the home of the snail darter, a 3-inch fish protected by the 1973 Endangered Species Act.

Work on the dam resumed in September after President Carter signed a bill ordering the completion of Tellico "notwithstanding any other laws." The Cherokees say that while Congress may be able to override environmental law, it has no right to set aside the First Amendment, which they say protects their religious beliefs about burial.

The land to be flooded includes the former Cherokee villages of Chota, the tribe's 18th century capital, and Tensai, from which the State of Tennessee derives its name. "That valley is like the Bible to Indians," tribal planner Bob Blankenship told an Associated Press reporter. "The Cherokee religion does not permit the disturbance of graves nor flooding them with water."

Washington update-Jay Edwards Associates

On October 26, 1979, the House passed H.R. 1885, the BIA/IHS Employee Preference bill. The bill was amended to strike language authorizing the reassignment of non-Indian employees without regard to Indian preference laws, because it was felt that failure to reassign the employees could seriously impair necessary services to Indians.

The Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs held hearings on the nomination of William Hallett to be Commissioner of Indian Affairs on October 29, 1979. Forrest Gerard accompanied Mr. Hallett to the witness table, and spoke in favor of his nomination; no opposition was voiced. On November 8, 1979, the Committee reported out the nomination with the recommendation that it be confirmed.

On October 31, 1979, the President signed into law (P.L. 96-95). The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

Hearings were held on November 5, 1979, on S.J. Res. 108, a bill to validate the effectiveness of certain plans for the use or distribution of funds to pay judgments awarded to Indian tribes (specifically excepted are the Confederated tribes of Warm Springs, among others). Testimony was heard from representatives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Law Resource Center.

On November 7, 1979, the Conference Report (H. Rept. 96-604) was reported out on the FY 1980 appropriations for the department of the Interior and Related Agencies. Included was an amendment which makes a \$5 million interest free loan to the Confederated

Tribes of Warm Springs for the Pelton Reregulating Hydro-electric dam project, to be repaid to the revolving Fund for Loans in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the end of 20 years. The Conference Report embodies the compromise agreements between the House and Senate on their respective versions of the FY 1980 Interior appropriations bill. The Conference Report must now be approved by both Chambers before it can be sent to the President for him to sign. It into law, which could occur within the next week.

On November 8, 1979, the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee ordered favorable reported H.R. 2757, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to engage in a feasibility study of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project in Washington (H. Rept. 96-601).

"More than Bows and Arrows" showing

A "beautiful and culturally relevant" film, "More Than Bows and Arrows," will be shown at 3 and 7 p.m. Monday, November 19, in the Hitchcock Auditorium, according to Ellen Smith, Central Oregon

Community College Native American Director.

Narrated by Dr. N. Scott Momaday, the film describes the history of U.S. Indian tribes and the changing of Native Americans in modern society. Dr. Momaday was the first

Native American to win the Pulitzer Prize for literature with his book "House of Dawn." Momaday was the COCC Commencement speaker in 1976.

The presentation is free and the public is invited to attend.