

Learning survival skills

What's a nice guy like Kenny doing in D.C.?

by Sandy Rangila

How does a fellow, plucked from the quiet, rural environment of Warm Springs, Oregon, cope with a demanding government position and the hectic pace of a cosmopolitan city like Washington, D.C.?

"All I've been doing is working," said Ken Smith during a rare weekend visit home. Earlier this year President Reagan appointed him the Interior Department's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

Ken said he discovered very quickly that in order to keep his energy level up he has to exercise regularly, maintain a healthy diet and stay physically fit. "If you don't do that the stress and pace of life in D.C. would catch up with you and bury you," he said.

"You can't go to work with a hangover because on any day you could have a major decision" to make, he remarked. He said he rarely has any alcoholic beverages during the week and that his eating and drinking habits have changed out of necessity.

"I'm almost like a machine Monday through Friday," he said. Then he rattled off what a typical day is like for him.

He rises at 5:45 a.m., jumps into his jogging clothes, and runs three miles at a nearby track. Although summers are hot and humid in Washington, D.C., he said his early morning run is a quiet, peaceful and relaxing time for him.

Following his run he showers, has breakfast, then leaves for the office at 7:15 or 7:20 a.m. It's only a 12 minute drive to work — but a very different kind of ride than the 12 minutes from his home on the Deschutes to the Warm Springs administration building.

"I've really learned how to use my horn," he quipped. "You have to be a very aggressive, yet defensive, driver in Washington, D.C. traffic. You're always honking your horn."

Regarding traffic, his wife Jeannie noted that she gets more respect from other drivers when she's wheeling the Mercedes around than when she's driving her little Honda. She, too, said she's learned "to drive like a maniac."

Once he gets to his office, Ken's time is booked solid hour-to-hour, all day, every day. Half his schedule is booked two weeks in advance and the balance of his schedule fills up each day during those two weeks.

Each Monday he attends a political appointee's meeting from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. All the assistant secretaries and deputies meet with Interior Secretary James Watt at that time. Other regularly scheduled meetings are at 7:45 a.m. on Tuesdays and an early morning meeting on Fridays with Don Hodell, Under Secretary of the Interior Department.

Back in his office, a staff of three to six people brief Ken about that day's special meetings. Some of those meetings might include get-togethers with tribal groups, attorneys and a variety of delegations.

"Each day I'm absorbing tremendous amounts of information. I become more intelligent each month," said Ken, meaning it. "Some days I'm faced with as many as four big issues. It was mind-boggling at first. Now I'm settling in — getting smart."

He said the toughest issues are the ones between two tribes — for example, disputes between the Navajos and the Hopis, and troubles between the Yurok and Hoopa people. There is usually one reservation crisis per month that Ken has to deal with, personally.

Travel is another facet of his job, but Ken doesn't fly first-class anymore. He goes excursion rate. "I can stretch the department's travel budget that way," he said, although he added that he avoids 'night coach' whenever possible.

His evenings are not always free despite his hectic daytime schedule. He devotes two to

three nights a week to business-related meetings. "It gives me a chance to get together with people who couldn't get in to see me during the day," he explained.

By Friday night Ken said he is both physically and mentally tired. He said he needs the weekends to rest up, swim and rejuvenate himself for the next week. But even during the weekends Ken and Jeannie don't just loaf around.

They have joined the Smithsonian Institute and Friends of Kennedy Center, as well as attending outdoor band concerts at the Jefferson Memorial and other cultural events. Ken even went to a ballet for the first time. He described it as "not too bad."

Due to his excellent physical condition, Ken captured the title of fastest runner in the Executive Branch on September 10. He captained his team "The Thundering Buffaloes" to first place in the Nike Capital Challenge, a three-mile benefit race for the Special Olympics. Ken's time was 22 minutes, 35 seconds.

Life in the nation's capital hasn't turned Ken into a "fat cat." The combination of his rigorous schedule, self-discipline and physical exercise has resulted in a loss of at least six pounds, a fact he is proud to point out.

Staying in shape and having learned some big-city survival skills have apparently enabled Ken to withstand the pressures of D.C. — and still stay a nice guy, too.



IN SHAPE—Interior's Asst. Sec. for Indian Affairs Ken Smith surged ahead of the pack to lead his team to victory in the Nike Capital Challenge, a Special Olympics benefit race. Staying in shape helps Ken deal with the stress and pace of D.C. Photos courtesy B.J. Samuel

Eliza Greene is part of a dream

by Pat Leno

A young girl's love of horses and an old man's dream have put Hot Dog Greene and Claude Puckett on the road of sweat and hard work with the hope they will find their fame and fortune.

"Hot Dog" Eliza Greene, yet to become a teenager, is the daughter of Neda Wesley and Harold Greene. She entered try-outs in August during the Jefferson County Fair to be a part of a horse and trick riding act for Claude Puckett. She was one of three girls selected to work with Puckett and his string of trained horses.

So in August she packed her clothes and moved to Prineville. And her temporary home has been a tent along side the Crooked River. Her dream of being able to spend her waking hours with horses has been answered.

Her day starts early as horses need to be fed and groomed early each day. Her afternoons are spent working

out on the routines used in the act.

An afternoon workout session consists of getting the horses ready and into teams. Hot Dog is learning to handle a team of matched horses harnessed to a chariot for racing. Being a light weight girl, with strong determination doesn't always mean she is able to fully control the team of horses, but her determination wins out.

She is one of a team which Puckett is building for his horse act. He has the dream which he refers to as his "dream of colors." He explains there are four colors of people in this world; red, black, yellow and white. He says this nation has been built by the four colors of the world and he intends to build his act around the four colors. Hot Dog will represent the color red, Terry Thompson white and Larie Adrain of Prineville is black.

Puckett said he has been



Ken accepts congratulations for leading "The Thundering Buffaloes" to victory. He's the fastest runner in the Executive Branch, outrunning other bureaucrats.

unable to find a girl to represent the yellow people but he knows she is out there somewhere. Eventually he plans to build a team of young men who will also represent the colors of the world.

Puckett said he has a dream that he figures is worth a million dollars once he can get all his horses and youngsters into what he calls a "shine." "It is going to take two long years to get the entire act into shape, the point where they will all shine," reflected Puckett as he watched the girls going through their rehearsal.

Faces and Places, of KATU,

Channel 2, will be in Prineville in November to tape Puckett and his group for a showing later in the year. Puckett said it is just one step toward his final goal.

Hot Dog shares this dream with Puckett and the other girls. She spends long hours with the horses and she knows the names of the 10 horses he uses in his Liberty Act of which she is a part. The Liberty Act is an act in which the horses are controlled by the sound of Puckett's voice and are unencumbered with any type of halters or reins.

The group has already

performed at the Wasco County Fair earlier this summer. The team appeared at the Pendleton Round-Up, where the girls entered in the Chariot races.

Puckett says he is on a long trail which he won't be able to complete in a day but he feels he and the girls have the time and they are going to make it through their work and determination. He describes the life he and Hot Dog and the girls lead as an ordeal but in the truest sense they love every bit of the hard work and heartbreak it will take for them to reach their ultimate goal.