

# The long ride from Alaska

Slow mile by slow mile Brad Petty is making his way from Fairbanks, Alaska to Watsonville, California. Unlike other travelers who might take a plane or drive and be there within hours or days Petty has been on the road since March 1981.

Traveling the 6,500 (two-way) miles by horse Petty is fulfilling a dream formulated in his youth and along with that he is campaigning for thousands of crippled children as he encourages folks he meets along the way to give to the Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children.

Petty's wife in Watsonville, California says, "he has always loved horses." Petty's father was a ferrier. Following in his father's footsteps Petty, after retiring from teaching school in Palo Alto, California, also shod horses full time.

When he was young, Mrs. Petty explains, he always wanted to make the ride between Alaska and California. After retirement the opportunity presented itself. "he's a restless man and I told him to do what he wanted to do," Mrs. Petty added.

Since the beginning of his trek she has been home taking care of the house and "paying the bills," Petty mentioned. Without her he could not have made the trip.

Petty's ride has taken place in two phases. After riding

north to Alaska he sold his horses, Roamer and Revally. He returned home to California where he decided his journey was not yet complete.

The people who owned the horses were willing to sell them back to Petty in exchange for two registered mares. Petty pulled a horse trailer to Alaska with the horses and was reunited with his own equine traveling companions. Since his arrival back in Alaska Petty has ridden up the Alaskan pipeline 100 miles past the Arctic Circle. His most recent ride, however, began in Fairbanks and will end in approximately four weeks when he arrives back home.

To mark the many places he has been and people he has met Petty's hat is adorned with pins and his pack horses carries four flags; Alaska, British Columbia, Oregon and California.

People he has met along the way have assisted him in many ways. Truckers would stop to ask if he needed anything. Petty reminisced. Usually he would only ask that they bring him feed for his horses. They would drop some by on their next trip through. "Not once did they charge me," Petty said.

Upon meeting people along the way Petty asks them to sign their name and home on a piece of white material carried especially for that purpose. The

main delight of traveling at a slow pace is being able to meet so many people. It's not such a lonely way to travel as some would think.

Many of the people Petty met on his trip to Alaska invited him to stay in their homes on his return journey. "You can't imagine how wonderful people are. I particularly enjoy the people I stay with at night," he mentioned.

Petty is continuing his journey south on Highway 97 to Klamath Falls. He'll then head toward Mr. Lassen crossing it if the weather is fair.

Upon his arrival home Petty will begin work on a book relating his adventures. He has many experiences he wishes to share with people.

His campaign encouraging people to donate to the Shriners Hospital is part of these experiences. Petty readily hands out envelopes for mailing contributions to the Shriners Hospital. He doesn't take donations on the road.

Emphasizing the work of the Shriners Hospital Petty explains it is free of charge for children needing corrective surgery. Children of any race, creed or color are eligible if they need the help.

Contributions may be sent to Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children, 1701 Nineteenth Avenue, San Francisco, California 94122.



Riding for the Shriners Hospital crippled children Brad Petty is just returning from Alaska. Along the way he encourages people to send donations to the hospital and if any child needs assistance to contact hospital officials.

Spilyay Tymoo photo by Shewczyk

## Conference stresses need for cooperative effort

by Pat Leno

The final note of the three day Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Northwest Conference stressed the need for participants to return to their homes with a good, positive attitude to promote the ICWA in their home country. The conference was co-sponsored by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Siletz Tribe.

The conference was the second in a planned series of three. The first was held at the Yakima Reservation and the next will be held in Lapwai, Idaho in April of 1983.

During the conference ICWA issues were discussed and possible answers were suggested by federal, state and tribal officials from throughout the Northwest.

The ICWA of 1978 established standards for the placement of Indian children in foster and adoptive homes. The best interest of the children is protected by returning jurisdiction to the tribal courts.

Before the passage of the act, it was the common practice of the state agencies to remove Indian children from their families with little regard given to placing them in other Indian homes. Since the act was passed in 1978, all cases involving Indian children should be transferred to tribal courts when the question of foster care or adoption is involved. The result has been that the children are being returned to traditional and cultural families living on the reservations.

In the keynote address Dough Hutchinson, chairman of the ICWA ad-hoc committee for Warm Springs, stated the act is working because it has invoked change but he

questioned if the change has been enough. He pointed out that one area of difficulty has been the lack of funding to implement the act. The governments involved in making the act work have had problems in knowing and accepting their exact roles, according to Hutchinson. He felt the federal government has played a very passive role in monitoring the act and that the states appear to be threatened by the act and seem to generate the feeling that they can't understand why it was written since state laws cover the issue of adoption and foster care, said Hutchinson. The tribal governments do not always have the full meaning of the act and its impact upon their ability to exert jurisdiction. He stressed communication, cooperation and correlation among the three governments to bring the act closer to its original goal.

### Funding

Finding the monies to enforce the act and monies to offer the services which are needed, has been a major drawback in the ICWA according to officials. In some cases, it has been necessary for the tribes to use state services as they do not have the services on their reservations. This has not always been taken kindly by state officials as they feel the tribes, in taking over the jurisdiction, should provide their own resources. In writing the act, the federal government in their planning for return of available for the support services needed.

### "lack of funding a major problem"

The responsibility has been placed on the Indian tribes and lack of funds often prevents

tribes from having adequate programs. Support programs have been identified as being vital in the transformation of Indian children going back into a traditional and cultural Indian setting.

### Foster Parents and Homes

The need for more foster parents on the reservation has been a need tribes must address in planning for return of children. The responsibility of being a foster parent entails meeting the needs of the children in everyday living situations. As one parent put it, "Children don't play by the rules. Raising children is a joy and gorilla warfare." The need for a place to house children until they go to a foster home is needed on most reservations. Warm Springs is ahead of other areas in that respect with the Vern Jackson home and the tribal group home serving as temporary shelters.

### "Communication and cooperation prevent misunderstanding"

### State/Tribal Agreements

There is a definite need for the states and tribes to work out agreements to identify problems before they arise. Art Bensell, chairman of the Siletz Reservation, pointed out that learning to work with the state can be an asset for tribes. It is important to gain these agreements to speed up the present processes now being used.

Agencies felt a real need for agreements in the management of the act. The State of Oregon had proposed a blanket agreement written to cover all tribes in Oregon but have decided this is not the best vehicle and are now looking at agreements with each tribe.

### Divorce and Paternity issues

The act was not written to give Indian parents special privileges in a divorce and custody case. It was written in cases of foster care, termination of parental rights, pre-adoption placement and adoption. It addresses the removal of a child from parental custody to ensure that a child has the advantages of a traditional and cultural Indian upbringing. The paternity issue's involve children who are members of an Indian tribe or who have the right to be a member of a tribe. The paternity of the child must be established by the court and by court order within the meaning of the act.

### Adoption Issues

Leroy Wilder, Siletz tribal attorney said the all Indians who appear in court outside reservations lands it must be remembered they are in an Anglo-American court system and the judge hearing the case is in all likelihood, an Anglo-American. This value system is different than tribal courts. All parents faced with the termination of their parental rights have the right to an attorney. They have the right to all resources available to them and the right to "good social work."

### "State rules for evidence are important factors"

Evidence must be given at the offset that the child is an Indian and the proper authorities of the child's tribe must be notified. Before a tribe and the proper authorities of the child's tribe must be notified. Before a tribe can assert jurisdiction over an Indian child in state courts, they need to know as soon as possible that the child and

parents are going to court. The best people to protect Indian rights are the Indians themselves, so don't rely on non-Indians to pass the word to your tribal court.

### Children's Service Division

The Children's Service Department (CSD) can be a resource to the Indian parent but it is necessary for them to know any Indian blood the child may carry. They CSD faces budget cuts as are most governmental agencies. But they are a resource and must not overlook any rights of Indians. They know of the different avenues available to parents.

### "Need seen for updating intake forms"

At this time, the CSD offices are in the process of making rules which will entail getting more input at a faster rate from the field. Each case is being dealt with on an individual basis. The agencies see a need for a clearinghouse for information. It has been an oversight by the state juvenile courts in not including ICWA in its present procedure.

Important reminders to all Indian people are: 1) it is necessary for tribes to exert jurisdiction to preserve their rights given in the act but they need to be notified of the case; 2) it is necessary for all parties to meet the requirements that the state requires for evidence; 3) Make certain the people you are dealing have the authority to make a decision for their agency; 4) Make certain the agencies know of the Indian blood and with which tribe the child is affiliated.

The act is there and it is for the Indian child and his best interests but the parents must be sure to start the process correctly.