

The Way It Is...

# Story depicts life on reservation

In the last segment, Harold received his first real test on the reservation... that of chopping a pile of wood that would make a logger shudder. He learned a bit about the way his grandfather thinks and what it's like to live in an isolated area.

by Frederick Bobb

Throughout the next few weeks, Harold came to the conclusion that maybe it wasn't his grandfather or the lady across the street who had seemed to be out of place. Maybe it was him. He felt a strong hunch that they had known what he had thought about his people before coming to Warm Springs. Maybe that was why his grandfather hadn't extended his hand in a formal greeting. Or the lady across the street hadn't waved her hand in a polite gesture. All the thoughts his friends had put in his head about the way his people might live over here had brought shame into Harold's heart.

They had known Harold was expecting to come to the reservation to find bums, drunks, drug addicts and any other things you could name off.

They had known Harold would have to go through some ceremony before they would allow him to stay on

the reservation.

Harold was now determined to stay on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. He wanted to prove to his people that he might be able to change his thinking. That he just might find some way of gaining their hearts. That maybe there was something terribly wrong here that he might be able to fix something, that he might be able to comfort.

But what? What was there that these people had to have fixed, in an already trouble-free environment? Harold thought. This place was trouble-free as far as he could tell. There was nothing wrong with it. But as an orange will mold, something came up.

The month was now September. The time in which all children would have to attend schools. Harold felt a relief in his heart when he heard that there was no high school on the reservation, and that all the Indian students would have to go to the nearby town of Madras to attend schools. There, he thought, I will be able to tell white kids about my life here ever since I left New York. They'll envy me, because I've seen something they haven't. Like breakdancing. Although he had not had the time to learn himself, he knew what it looked

like. He hoped the kids there were interested in how the rest of the world was living today.

But he learned that it wasn't going to work that way.

Harold boarded his bus promptly at 7 a.m. and took a seat. He watched in awe as most of the kids boarding the bus looked as though they were going to a gym to work out, not attend school. These "breakers" wearing sweatpants and windbreakers and wore bandanas around their necks and wrists. The bandanas seemed to serve no purpose that Harold could see, and he thought to himself that he would never dress that way as long as he had a choice.

There was a group of people Harold could easily recognize as preppies. These people usually sat in groups talking of things that would bore a great writer to death. They were dressed in neat clothes most of the time, but, as he would learn, on other days, their clothes seemed to be the most terrible things in the world.

"Preppy," thought Harold, is just as bad as "breaker." Why would a person race another for the latest fashions when the clothes they have now would last for as long as they could fit them? It all seemed somewhat disgusting to Harold.

Then there were the punks. What a horrible thing to be Harold thought. Some of them, when told "My god, you look disgusting!" would merely reply, "Thank you very much." These people would wear many necklaces that looked painfully uncomfortable. They dressed in clothes that didn't go together at all, or things that were so outrageous it would put the preppies to shame. All these different categories, it seemed to Harold, had something to do with recognition. They needed to be recognized. Each person had to be more outrageous than the next.

There was another group of people. Unnoticed, and unnamed, because they didn't try to stand out. They were what Harold called the "normals." They dressed regularly, they didn't act snobby or try to beat the person in front of them. They were warm-hearted people who knew the true meaning of friendship. They would accept any friend, at any time, and would try dearly not to get in the way of others. They were like tiny animals hiding in a field of jagged rocks trying to avoid the deadly vultures that flew above them.

The first day of school was just as it had been in New York

except for the fact that you wouldn't be able to talk to a person unless they were a normal. If they weren't a normal, they would turn the other way and stomp off as if insulted. Harold wondered if they were this way to all the normals, or just the Indian normals.

Harold was shocked to discover they had such a terrible thing at this new school of his. Prejudice. Oh yes, it was here. You could hear the people—both Indian and white—talking in the halls about how disgusting the other race was. He didn't know if the people had wanted to be heard, or if they were saying it in a private conversation. But in any case, he heard it.

Why would they say such things? To be cruel? To try to make themselves look better than the person they were talking about? Harold didn't quite understand. But he knew that he, himself, would never put a person of another race down until he knew exactly how much better, if at all, he was than they. But he was glad that most Indians and whites didn't feel this way. They would mingle and talk, and mostly have fun. This was what he wanted to do. He wanted to be a person who didn't even think of prejudice at all.

But the prejudice among the

punks, preppies, breakers and Harold's made-up class, the normals, would continue. They would be in constant competition. A silent war going on right inside a public school. And it would remain hidden from the teachers.

A silent war. In about four month's time, Harold had learned when to keep his mouth shut, and when to open it. There were some things that required a lot of thinking and others that would require very little thought at all. But whatever the situation, he knew some things deserved more than a mere glance.

He had begun to notice things that might have slipped his mind in New York. For one thing, the air here was clear. And the smell of the country was so sweet.

Sometimes, he would sit out back where he had to chop-wood every now and then, and think about going back to New York. He'd be able to handle it, but he was somewhat afraid of what his friends there would think. They'd probably call him "Chief" or some weird name like that. And that would insult him more than him calling them "honkies." But they'd eventually grow to learn that Harold R. Simpson was back in town.

**End of third installment.** Future editions of Spilyay will carry subsequent installments.

## Cultural awareness necessary

Seven hundred fifty Indian students attend schools in the 509-J school district. These students generally grow up in a culture different than their white counterparts. Teachers, too, are unfamiliar with the culture and government of these Indian students.

"There has been a long-standing concern" in this district over these differences and a continuous effort to narrow the gap of understanding, says Curriculum Coordinator Ron Bruton. Acquainting teachers and students with Indian culture and the government of

Warm Springs would be beneficial to all.

An effort is being made to develop a multi-cultural awareness guide to be used by teachers in the schools.

A committee, composed of 12 teachers, teacher's aides and one community member has entered into the development of this guide and is currently in the organizational stage.

Completion of the guide is planned for the end of summer, says Bruton. The committee is very ambitious, he adds, with many ideas. Right now "we

would like to get the group into a cohesive unit," and go beyond the first stage of development.

Coordination with the Warm Springs Tribe and the Warm Springs education committee will be part of the project process.

At this point the outline of the guide includes: one-third of the guides will discuss what teachers should know about the culture; one-third will provide methods which will help as teachers experience problems; and, one-third will describe the district's multi-cultural efforts.

The guide will be developed for use at all grade levels.

## Center plans activities

The Warm Springs Community Center is planning an Easter extravaganza. Two plays will be presented, one by children and one by adults. The children's play will be entitled "Bunny Finds a Home." The adults play will be "The Crucifixion." Children's practice will be on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. at the center, adult practice will also be on Mondays, but at 6:30 p.m. The plays will be presented April 6 in the picnic area behind the center. Also on that day will be an egg hunt and an appearance by the Easter bunny. There will also be an egg toss and an egg roll.

Ladies are invited to join in the "Let's try and lose weight together" program. Everyone has tried to lose weight at one time or another through different methods. This program is designed for those who have

unsuccessfully tried to lose. Contact Lucinda Green for more information.

The next L'il Miss Warm Springs bingo will be April 11 beginning at 6:30 p.m. The jackpot will be \$150.

### Community Center Calendar

March 23-24	Sixteen and under basketball tourney
March 25	Little boys, girls basketball fundraising bingo, 6:30 p.m.
March 26	Foosball tournament, 3:00 p.m. Easter basketmaking, bring own baskets, 12 noon
March 28	Pool tournament, 3:00 p.m.
March 29	Dance, 8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.
March 30	Easter program
March 30-31	Eighteen and under basketball tournament

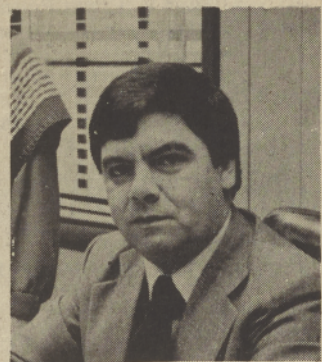
## New Judge rapping gavel in tribal court

This article is being reprinted due to a layout error in our last issue. We apologize for any inconvenience we may have caused.

The Warm Springs Tribal Court's newest judge is Richard Frederick, a Chippewa from Turtle Mountain, Belcourt, North Dakota. He brings with him many years' chief judge experience.

Before coming to Warm Springs, Frederick spent about six months studying criminal justice at Bismarck College. Prior to going to college, Frederick served as chief judge for the Mescalero Apache in New Mexico for about a year-and-a-half. There were also two associate judges and one juvenile judge assisting him with the case load.

Frederick also worked for his own tribe as chief judge for about 12 years. "I was probably



their youngest judge," said Frederick. "I was 23." While serving as chief judge for his tribe, he also served as chief appellate judge for the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, Fort Totten Sioux, Standing Rock Sioux, three affiliated tribes of Fort Berthold and Wagner, South Dakota.

Frederick explained that for the first four years at Turtle Mountain he was the only judge.

"I dealt with every problem." Frederick has no law degree. He is a graduate of the National

College of State Judiciary in Reno, Nevada and a graduate of judiciary institutes such as the North Dakota State Judge Association and the National Juvenile Judge Association. He is also a member of the Native American Indian Court Judges Association. He has served as their president and has been a board member for about ten years.

Frederick and his family are living in Warm Springs. He said he has been a long-time friend of Ken Smith's and had always wanted to come to Warm Springs. He found the chief judge's position advertised in the newspaper and applied. He was notified in January that he had been accepted for the job. Frederick joins associate judge Anita Jackson and Judge Dave Harding.

From Texas to Oregon...

## Elstons make Warm Springs their home

by Donna Behrend

It was March 15, 1960 when Allen Elston arrived in Warm Springs with his wife and two young daughters. They had moved from Texas with three week's notice. The snow was melting and five days later Elston would deliver his first sermon in the Warm Springs Baptist Church.

The Elston's first impression of Warm Springs was the "friendliness and openness" of the community. "I've learned through the years that the friendliness and openness are a part of the culture. I think the people here will accept anyone who has the willingness to learn."

And learn, he has. He's learned the Warm Springs languages and the cultural ways. And he's learned that community members have come to depend on him for various needs—whether it be rounding up cattle, searching for lost hunters or saying a few words at a funeral. He's also learned that he's accepted.

The Warm Springs Baptist Church was built in 1958 by a contractor who went from town to town building churches and who also served as pastor. Elston was the first resident pastor. The Elstons, whose family now included three daughters, lived in the church building for nine years until, with the help of councilman Delbert Frank, land was set aside in West Hills for a parsonage. Through the windows of that home is seen the peaceful Warm Springs valley a sight for which Elston jokingly charges a quarter a glance.

Since arriving, Elston has seen a major change in the ministry of his church. The ministry for the first ten years was for children. But with very few adults participating, the church wasn't growing. "We couldn't grow as a church," said a reflective Elston. Also, church membership dropped—many people went back to their traditional religions.

In 1970, the ministry changed, with more emphasis placed on adults. Since that time, the church has grown both in numbers and in spirit, says Elston. Now, not only are women attending church, but the men are coming too. "Whole families are attending now. We're really in an upward growth time. In the last two years, we've had good response and a good age span, from babies to the elderly."

With that growth, church members assuming more and more leadership responsibilities. "It's our intent to work ourselves out of a job," said Elston. The church is no longer completely dependent on the main church, the Southern Baptist

Convention. "The church is independent and is paying over half of my salary," said Elston. "The Convention supplements my salary."

To accommodate anticipated future growth, the church plans to introduce Christian entertainment through Macy's cable system. It will be sports, drama and Bible study and eventually local programming will be on the air.

Elston's success here in Warm Springs may not have been possible without his wife Juanita. She has been his helpmate at home as well as on the job. "Juanita helps women meet their social needs," Elston explained. "The women get together and discuss problems and have Bible study." Talking over personal problems, says Juanita, is very important and she feels very strongly that it should continue.

Elston says this his wife has been the "backbone to work" and has provided real growth to the adults. She conducts adult Sunday school sessions for those 18 something of age and older—something she says is "real exciting."

The Elston's have spent nearly their entire adult lives in Warm Springs. They have raised their three daughters, Alicia, Donna and Marsha, here. "This has become home to us for sure. We've lived here longer than

anywhere," Elston said. "This is home to our family. If we moved or retired, the kids wouldn't have a home."

The Elstons have witnessed many changes in the community since the "hard days" of the early 60s. "Along with the changes in the community, our church life has changed, too. "We've had a ministry to help people where the need is." Elston said that more time is now spent pastoring to people and that less time is spent in the community. However, the door is always open and they are there to help.

To commemorate their 25 years in Warm Springs, church members, friends and family members have planned an anniversary celebration honoring the Elstons Sunday, March 17 at the church. "This is not a retirement party," Elston explained. "We're celebrating an anniversary." The entire community is invited to attend.

The Elstons have so long been a part of our community that no one really thinks of them as "outsiders." And they in turn feel the same way about Warm Springs. "It feels good to be a part of the community," Elston said.

Not only that, but he's a pastor to a church as well as a helper to the community.



Allen and Juanita Elston will be celebrating the 25 years they have lived in Warm Springs on Sunday, March 17.