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INDIAN CENTER NEWS

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~~This issue is the fifth anniversary issue.~~ When the first edition of the Indian Center News was published five years ago, it contained a message from Pearl Warren who was then the President of the American Indian Women's Service League. In this message Pearl expressed the hopes and aspirations of all the Indian women in the league when she told of what it was that this newly formed organization wanted to do. She told of how they dreamed of a place where Indians would be helping other Indians, where Indian families who needed assistance could come and get clothes or food and where Indians could come to learn how to help themselves. To make a great story short, some of the things Pearl spoke of have come to pass and we have asked her to write a message looking back on the last five busy years and telling us what she hopes for the future.

PEARL'S MESSAGE

The Indian Center News is five years old this month. In February, 1960 the American Indian Women's Service League members published the first Indian Center News on a hand mimeograph and the paper had to be spread around the floor to dry. Now we are sending the Indian Center News to ~~tribes, other Indian organizations, and many~~ ~~and~~. We try to bring you news that will interest both the Indians and our friends.

A lot has happened in the past five years, now we have an Indian Center which was created by members of the Service League. The Indian Center is a place for Indians and we created this place because of our concern and interest in our own people.

Our Center was started, as I stated, by the Indian women in the city of Seattle because we wanted a place we could call our own. Members of the Indian Center staff are Indian women. I am Pearl Warren (Makah), the Executive Director, Dorothy Lombard (Clallam) is our bookkeeper and Betty Kennedy (Haida) is our receptionist. Our working hours are 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. everyday except Sunday. We have "bankers hours" but our pay is not "bankers pay". I do not think it is money that keeps us here it is a ~~love for our people.~~

The Indian Center receives some financial assistance from the ~~tribes~~ they receive contributions from church groups, womens organizations and individuals. Besides the monies already mentioned, the American Indian Women's Service League, who operates the Center, must raise \$300. a month. We are kept pretty busy with money making projects like our ~~tribes~~ that are held the first Sunday of every month, ~~tribes~~ every month after Service League meetings.

The members have really responded by supporting the organization they belong to. The ~~tribes~~ are all dedicated people, they have to be, because they don't get anything material out of the hours and days that they volunteer their services. But we have all gained something out of the time and effort we spend at the Center, we have gained some real nice friends, Indians and non-Indians. One of the best things we have learned is to work together without fighting among ourselves.

I think we can all learn something about how to support our Indian organizations. If we do not support them they cannot be effective and many times it has been necessary that an Indian organization be turned over to non-Indians. This can be caused by non participation and refusal to hold office by the Indians themselves. If you have the urge to criticize Indian organizations stop and ask yourself, "What have I done to HELP keep the organization going?" The Service League policy has been if you are dissatisfied with what is taking place on a committee, volunteer to serve

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on that committee so you can do what you think needs to be done, don't just sit-back and criticize.

Our sympathy goes out to Indian women in Seattle who have not joined in the work of the organization. We wonder, are they ashamed of being an Indian? Maybe they wouldn't feel comfortable in our group because we are all so proud of our Indian blood.

Many of our Indian people are so good about helping, there is a special happiness for them in knowing that whatever they do, whatever they create belongs to them because they know they are doing something worthwhile something they believe in. For too long we have depended upon the non-Indians to do for us, the time has come when we must start doing more for ourselves and each other.

Especially since we are all the same, all North American Indians, no matter where we go or what we do our heritage will not change. A most pitiful person is one who doesn't want to acknowledge his Indian ancestry because he is afraid of not being accepted by society. Our Indian teachings say if someone cannot accept you as you are then they are not worth knowing. By trying to hide their Indian ancestry, some Indians cheat themselves of a wonderful proud feeling for something that is not worthwhile and that doesn't bring true happiness.

So please, help us to let our children grow to have pride in the fact that they are Indian. Create a promising example and pass on to the future generation something of yourself.

We will be having our annual dance before summer. We hope you folks will all support our dance by attending it. You can also help us by attending the potluck dinners every month and meeting some of the Indian people from many tribes who make these potluck dinners a success. By supporting the Indian organization in your community, by becoming a part of the community in which you live, you and I and all Indians will benefit.

GRAB YOUR PEN AND START WRITING!

DEAR FRIEND,

Now is your chance to help INDIAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS!

The following special bill (quoted in part) is being presented to the Oregon Legislature by SENATOR RAPHAEL RAYMOND and REPRESENTATIVE DON MCKINNIS for possible financial assistance for Indian Festival of Arts:

"There is hereby appropriated for the biennium beginning July 1, 1965, out of the General Fund, the sum of \$50,000 for the purpose of paying premiums and other expenses in connection with the annual Indian Festival of Arts, one-half of which shall be payable to the treasurer of the Indian Festival of Arts, Inc., July 1, 1965 and one-half of which shall be payable July 1, 1966."

Please write IMMEDIATELY to:

Senator Raphael Raymond
Oregon Legislative Assembly
Salem, Oregon

OR Representative Don McKinnis
Oregon Legislative Assembly
Salem, Oregon

In your letter please give your reasons why Indian Festival of Arts merits financial support from the State of Oregon. For example:

1. Our fast-disappearing American Indian culture must be preserved.
2. The Indian people deserve inspiration and encouragement in order to contribute their best in both the traditional and contemporary.
3. The ultimate goal -- a beautiful and authentic American Indian Art Center and Museum in Eastern Oregon, open the year 'round would improve the economy and attract favorable world-wide attention to all of Oregon and the northwest.

Cordially,

Indian Festival of Arts, Inc.

WRITE THAT LETTER TODAY! REMEMBER, ALL OF US, AS INDIANS, HAVE TO HELP EACH OTHER, WHEN ANY INDIAN BENEFITS YOU BENEFIT.

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

Indian Center Director, Pearl Warren (Makah) and Aleatha Olney Edsall (Yakima) attended the Educational Conference in Toppenish, Washington on February 17 and 18. Indian education committees from Idaho and Washington participated in discussions concerning the many phases of Indian education.

Both cases lead to dropouts! However there has been a noticeable decrease within the past three years according to statistics of the Yakima Reservation. In 1961-1962 Indian children of the Yakima area were absent 19.75 percent of the time and in 1962-1963 of 1,143 students enrolled, 485 of them are classified as late entries. This makes [redacted] Since Educational Specialist, Robert Muehe with the aid of his assistant, Michael Mayer have been hired to study and investigate Indian education problems of the Yakima Tribe, the percentages of absenteeism and late entries have decreased considerably. In 1963-64 children were absent 8.2 percent of the time and late enrollees dropped to 31.8 percent. The Education Specialists are permitted to study the absentee records in the schools and if a student shows an unreasonable amount of unexcused absences then the student and his parents are visited by one of the specialists. Wapato and White Swan have gone so far as to take advantage of and make good use of the courts of law by using them to help [redacted] from children aged 8 through 16 years. They believe that [redacted] for parents who deliberately allow their children to be absent have helped to improve Indian attendance.

Even though these two areas, absenteeism and late entries have been improved dropouts still present a serious problem. Dropouts range from 18 to 21.8 percent of all children in grades from nine to twelve. Withdrawals within the school year of both elementary and secondary students are also cause for worry. In most cases it is unknown how much time elapses before a child is re-enrolled or whether they enroll at all in a school during the same year they were withdrawn from regular classes. Efforts similar to those made to improve late entries and absenteeism are being concentrated towards the dropout and withdrawal problems. Even though there are some Indian children with perfect attendance it is true that a large percentage of them miss more school days in one year than most of the other children with whom they must compete miss in 12 years of school.

Help is being established in a variety of phases so that educational problems can eventually be corrected. They are working towards elementary and secondary guidance, home improvement, economic improvement, family counseling and community efforts. If these and many more areas improve, so will the over-all Indian education situation.

The Wapato School District, recognizing the Indian education problems, have hired an accredited teacher as a truant officer and two senior high school counselors. They make home visitations to parents of children whom they believe would be in trouble if poor attitudes and situations were allowed to continue.

Mr. Muehe says that a greater parental concern; improved communication between schools, parents, children, and the Yakima Indian Agency; and strict enforcement of existing compulsory attendance laws by all the school districts will eventually solve our Indian education problems.

One of the new methods of communication has been the development of a Youth Camp under the direction of the Yakima Tribe's Education Committee Chairman, Stanley Smartlourt. This camp is designed for students ranging from nine through sixteen years. The camp is open during the summer months and activities are coordinated by professional camp supervisors. We feel that such an enlightened program is definitely a step in the right direction!

POTLUCK

We are glad to tell you that the AIWSL March Potluck Committee served one hundred and thirty five diners. They cooked twenty chickens and twelve salmon.

Mrs. Minnie Owens contributed towards this successful dinner by bringing several of her friends.

The next Potluck will be served on April 4 at the Indian Center between 2:30 and 5:00 pm.*****

DECEASED

Our sympathy and condolences to the Millie Cross family of Puyallup and the Harry Myers family of Tacoma whose father, James Myers (Clallam) of Cinebar, Washington recently passed away.
