



# Elder Voices

Newsletter of the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.

Summer, 1992

## **Health care act may help elders**

The revised Senate bill reauthorizing the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, S.2481, includes several new provisions benefitting Indian elders. Approved on June 16 by the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, the bill incorporates several NICOA recommendations, according to board chairman James Hena.

"It does not," he added, "address the fundamental issue of IHS trust responsibility to elders."

The Senate bill, which is still subject to Congressional modification, provides for the inclusion of geriatrics as an IHS-recognized profession. It also extends to 30 days the current 72-hour limit for elders to report contract care.

If passed intact, the bill will allow processing of medicaid applications by tribal health workers, and authorizes the IHS to pay medicare Part B premiums, deductibles, and co-payments for elders who are within 200 percent of the federal poverty line. A nursing home demonstration project is also included.

*Green Bay hotels filling*

## **National Indian aging conference gets White House approval**

**W**ith three hotels already booked and a fourth nearly full, interest in NICOA's 1992 White House Conference on Indian Aging continues to exceed initial expectations (See "Conference Update," this issue). The conference, which will draw Indian elders, tribal leaders, legislators, and service providers from throughout the United States, is scheduled for Green Bay, Wisc., on August 30-Sept. 1, with tours and Elder Sessions continuing on Sept. 2.

Designated as an official White House Conference on Aging, the Green Bay event will be hosted by the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, which has committed substantial staff, funds, and effort for conference production. The Oneida tribe will host a traditional Indian feast, fashion show, and pow-wow as part of the conference.

The conference, entitled "Elders Speak: Hear Our Voices!" is sponsored by Kraft General Foods (an operating unit of Philip Morris) and the Administration on Aging (AoA). Dr. Joyce Berry, Commissioner of the AoA and the nation's most influential voice in aging issues, has been invited to provide the conference's keynote speech.

Senate staffer Bill Benson of Washington state will speak on Monday. As staff director for the Senate Subcommittee on Labor and Human Resources, Benson spearheads Senate reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. A dynamic and personable speaker, he is responsible for the inclusion of several key OAA provisions benefitting Indian elders.

Other invited speakers include Dr. Yvonne Jackson, AoA Associate Commissioner of American Indian and Alaskan Native Aging; Gaiashkabos, president of the National Congress of American Indians; and former Red Lake Chippewa tribal chairman Roger Jourdain.

**The National Indian  
Council On Aging, Inc.**

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**Your friends  
Aren't all Indians**

NICOA asks you to join us in expressing personal appreciation to the following advocates, who have made, and continue to make, exceptional contributions to Indian elders in 1992.

*Bill Benson*, who, while working for Sen. Brock Adams (WA), presented the causes of Indian elders at dozens of Congressional meetings and hearings over the past several years. He is responsible for the inclusion of many Indian-specific provisions in the current Older Americans Act.

*Helen Spencer*, an attorney for Evergreen Legal Services of Yakima, Wash., has waged an effective, often-single-handed battle for Indian elders in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and Indian Trust Income Exemption legislation.

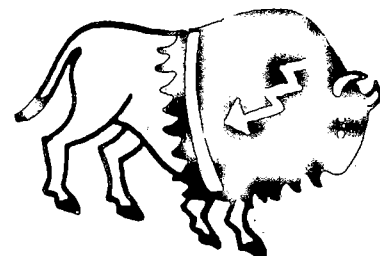
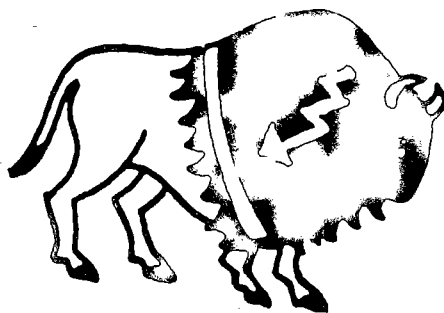
*Louise Kamikawa*, founder and former executive director of the National Pacific/Asian Resource Center, led a minority-advocate lawsuit against California's unfair Area Agency on Aging funding policies. She also worked tirelessly for Indian elder employment interests in the Older Americans Act. Her powerful advocacy may result in 600 new SCSEP jobs for Indian elders in the next five years.

**Tied to Older Americans Act  
1993 White House Conference  
on Aging stalled**

**T**he 1993 White House Conference on Aging will probably be delayed until 1994, according to Congressional sources. As part of the Older Americans Act, funding for the conference is stalled as Congress refuses to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA).

Projected funding for the event includes "mini-conferences" produced by states and non-profit advocates. Many of these organizations argue that little time remains for them to produce conferences similar to NICOA's prior to a '93 White House Conference on Aging.

The OAA reauthorization process has been stalled since early this year due to House and Senate disagreements over a retirement income earnings test amendment introduced by Senator John McCain of Arizona. If the act does not pass, funding increases for title VI per-meal rates, elder rights services, elder employment, and Indian elder research centers will not occur. Aging programs throughout the nation would be forced to continue operation at 1992 funding levels.



**Fun at Green Bay**

**Reception, pow wow, traditional meal**

**T**raditional food, fashion and a large pow wow take the Green Bay spotlight on Monday, August 31. Conference registration includes admission to a Sunday evening NICOA reception at the Embassy Suites, as well as Monday's Oneida Feast, Fashion Show, and Pow wow at the Radisson Hotel.

While conferees enjoy traditional Wisconsin Indian dishes, the fashion show will offer a look at traditional Indian clothing from around the nation. Interested participants should contact NICOA for a fashion show modeling form.

The Oneida pow wow, featuring five host drums, is expected to draw a huge crowd from throughout the United States. It will begin at 7:00 p.m. on the Radisson Hotel grounds.

# PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

## "ELDERS SPEAK: HEAR OUR VOICES!"

### *Pre-Conference Activities*

<i>Saturday, August 29</i>	1 - 6 p.m.	Registration.
<i>Sunday, August 30</i>	7 a.m. - 9 p.m.	Registration
	7 - 9 a.m.	Variety of religious services.
	8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	National Title VI Directors Annual Meeting.
	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Exhibit set-up.
	10 -12 a.m.	Health walk.
	2 p.m. - 7 p.m.	Exhibits open.
<i>Conference Activities</i>	2 - 5 p.m.	General Session. Welcome, keynote speakers.
	6 - 7 p.m.	General Reception.
	7 - 9 p.m.	Regional Caucuses for board elections.
<i>Monday, August 31</i>	8:30 - 9:45 a.m.	General Session.
	9:45 a.m.	Break.
	10 - 12 a.m.	Agenda and Elder Sessions.
	12 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Hosted Picnic Lunch. Optional \$.50 meal at Oneida Senior Center (1st 100 elders).
	1 - 2:45 p.m.	General Session.
	2:45 p.m.	Break.
	3 - 5 p.m.	Agenda and Elder Sessions.
	5 p.m.	Deadline for responses to Agenda Questionnaire.
	6 - 7:30 p.m.	Oneida Tribe's hosted Traditional Feed, Radisson Hotel grounds.
	6 - 7 p.m.	Traditional Fashion Show, Radisson Hotel.
	7 - 10 p.m.	Oneida Pow Wow, Radisson Hotel grounds.
<i>Tuesday, Sept. 1</i>	7 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Registration.
	7 - 8 a.m.	Prayer breakfast, Radisson Hotel.
	9 - 10:15 a.m.	General Session.
	10:15 a.m.	Break.
	10:30 - 12 a.m.	Title VI Directors Presentation.
	12 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch on your own. Optional \$.50 meal at Oneida Senior Center (1st 100 elders).
	1:30 - 3 p.m.	General Session. Board introductions. Agenda Committee presents National Indian Aging Agenda for the Future.
	3 p.m.	Conference official business ends.
	6 - 8 p.m.	National Title VI Board of Directors meeting.

### *Post-Conference Activities*

<i>Wednesday, Sept. 2</i>	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	NICOA Board of Directors meeting.
	9 a.m. - 12 noon	Optional Elder Sessions.
	10 a.m.	Optional bus tours.
	1 p.m.	Optional bus tours.

# Yes . . . I want to join the National Indian Council on Aging

I will receive a membership card, four yearly issues of Elder Voices, discounts on hotel rates, discounts on NICOA Special Edition prints by Sam English, and a window decal that proclaims my support for Indian elders.

NAME: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TRIBAL AFFILIATION: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

TRIBAL ROLL/CENSUS #: \_\_\_\_\_

COPY OF TRIBAL ROLL/CENSUS ATTACHED:  YES  NO

Please attach a copy for proof of enrollment. Disregard if previous member. Use form below if copy unavailable.

**VOTING Member (\$10.00)** - Voting member shall be ... "those members elected by the National Indian Council on Aging in Phoenix, AZ on June 17, 1976... {and} any Indian who is enrolled as a member of an Indian tribe, band or combination of tribes and bands, recognized by the United States Department of the Interior ... {and} who is 55 years of age or older."

**ASSOCIATE Member (\$40.00)** - any Indian (under 55 yrs. old) or **non-Indian** individual may become a **non-voting** Associate member of the National Indian Council on Aging upon payment of dues.

**ORGANIZATIONAL Membership (\$100.00)** any organization may be admitted to non-voting Organizational membership upon payment of dues. Restricted to Organizations only.

**PAYMENT ENCLOSED:** Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Money Order # \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_

## FOR VOTING MEMBERS ONLY (A tribal official must attest/sign)

I hereby attest to the fact that \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name of individual)

is a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ tribe,

of \_\_\_\_\_ Enrollment # \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name of state)

**CERTIFIED BY:** (Name and title of official) \_\_\_\_\_

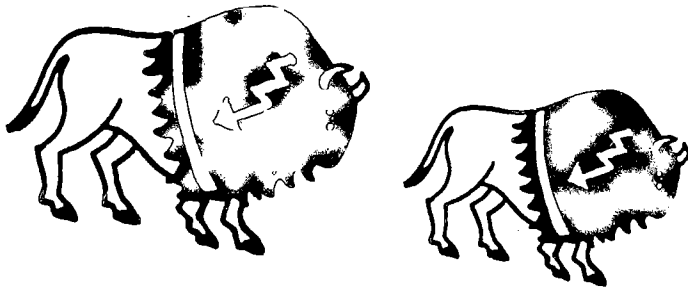
Green Bay . . . don't they play football there?

## Conference Update

**A**rrangements for Green Bay are proceeding on schedule. The only surprise so far is the large number of advance hotel reservations. The Green Bay Radisson, Day's Inn, and Motel 6 are already filled, and the conference headquarters hotel, the Embassy Suites, may be sold out as you read this. Revised estimates of conference attendance are going up fast . . . maybe 1,000 or more conferees.

We have negotiated rates for conferees at additional Green Bay hotels. The Holiday Inn City Centre, a half-block from the Embassy Suites, offers 24-hour pool, complimentary cable tv, and a \$2.00 breakfast special. NICOA conference rates are \$58/single and \$68/double. Call 414/437-5900 for reservations.

The Imperial Inn, also close to conference headquarters, offers an outdoor pool and free coffee. Rates start at \$30 for singles, ranging to \$50 for four people and two beds. Phone 414/437-6232.



Although registration will open Saturday, August 29, the conference officially begins at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 30. You'll want to be in your seat early, because a memorable opening ceremony is planned.

Responses to NICOA's Agenda Questionnaire are trickling in slowly, with about 20 tribes and Indian organizations responding to date. More completed Questionnaires are arriving each week, especially from Alaska. The first tribe to respond was Sandia Pueblo of New Mexico.

Remember that Green Bay's room tax is ten percent.



**Plymouth Rock lands on the Pilgrims**

### Conference Notes, cont'd . . .

Admission to conference sessions will be restricted to **registered badge-wearers only**. Badges will be checked at sessions this year, so don't leave yours in your room!

The large number of conferees dictates that our two-hour Aging Agenda sessions must **limit speakers to five minutes each**. Experts will be on hand to clarify issues, but extended debate is not possible. Only written Agenda Questionnaire Forms, sponsored by tribes or Indian organizations, will be accepted as resolutions at these meetings.

The National Title VI Directors Assn. will hold their annual board meeting in Green Bay at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 1. The organization will preview their new film as part of their NICOA Nutrition Session on Tuesday morning.

Regional caucuses for NICOA board elections will be held Sunday night, August 30. Board members will be introduced at the final session on Tuesday, Sept. 1.

## How to advocate

Indian elders everywhere need your help in getting the Older Americans Act reauthorized by Congress.

*Please write your state's Congressional representatives as soon as possible (sample letter on right). It is also important to write Senators John McCain of Arizona, Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, and the Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, attn: Carol Mitchell.*

Here's how to address letters to the House of Representatives:

*The Honorable (name)  
United States House  
of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515*

*Dear Congressman (or Congress woman)(name):*

Here's how to address letters to Senators:

*The Honorable (name)  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510*

*Dear Senator(name):*

**National Indian  
Council on Aging, Inc.  
6400 Uptown Blvd., NE  
City Centre 510 W.  
Albuquerque, NM 87110**

Write a letter like this to Congress

## Help pass the Older Americans Act

Date

The Honorable John Doe  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Doe:

I am writing to ask your help in obtaining Congressional reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. American Indian elders, as the nation's most disadvantaged minority older population, are extremely dependent on the quality and quantity of federal services they receive through the OAA.

We are distressed to learn that OAA provisions for older Indians are in jeopardy because of Congressional failure to reauthorize this important legislation. Our elders need the research centers, the jobs, the per-meal increase, and the tribal protective services afforded by the pending version of the OAA.

Indian people have waited many years for adequate aging services from the federal government. Please don't make them wait even longer by failing to reauthorize this legislation.

Sincerely,

(Name)

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