



# Elder Voices

Newsletter of the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.

Fall, 1993

First-ever long term care

## Clinton health plan includes elders

**A** draft of the Clinton Health Care Reform proposal reveals several promising initiatives that would affect Indian elders. The proposal, according to a memo from a Washington, D.C., law firm, "calls for a five year transition period, during which the IHS will renovate and expand its clinics.

"After that, the IHS will provide all of the services provided in the Comprehensive Benefit Package."

These include:

- annual medical exams for those aged 65 and older;
- hospice care for those with a life expectancy of six months or less;
- extended care (up to 100 days per year) in a skilled nursing home or rehabilitation facility;
- outpatient rehabilitation;
- durable medical equipment, prosthetic and non-custom orthotic devices.

The Clinton provisions, if they survive the upcoming political process (which is expected to take at least a year), will mandate the Indian Health Service's first-ever attempts to provide LTC for older Indians.

NICOA was cautioned that optimism at this early stage would be premature, as the Clinton proposal may undergo substantial changes before it is finalized. Further, no funding provisions are yet proposed, and Congress will undoubtedly provide substantial input.

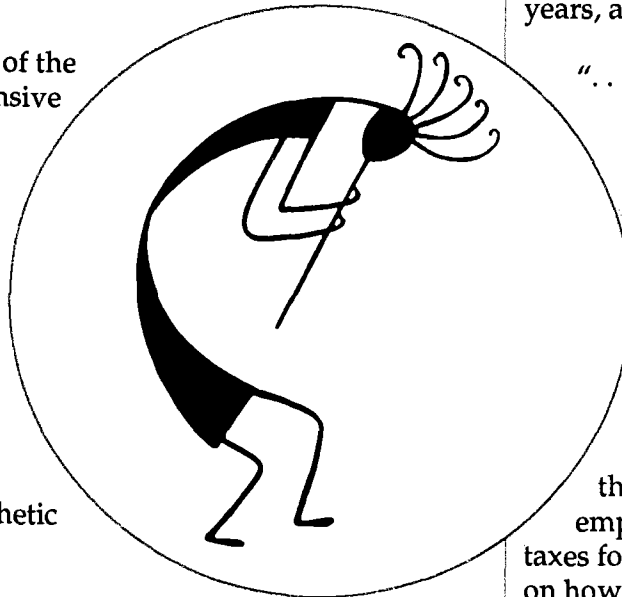
"Still, we are optimistic," noted NICOA executive director Dave Baldrige. "This window of opportunity is a first for Indian LTC."

## Experts urge caution

Washington insiders say it's too early to be optimistic about long-term care provisions for Indian elders. As reported in *Indian CountryToday*, "The cost to reform the IHS is \$2.3 billion over five years, according to IHS estimates.

"... the plan is vague or silent on several points, according to lawmakers and tribal leaders. Sen. McCain (R-Ariz.), who is vice-chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, said the plan's specific attention to Indian health care needs is 'a positive sign,' but cautioned that since the plan relies heavily on ... employer contributions and taxes for financing, doubts remain on how expanded IHS services will be paid for."

Long-term care for Indian elders, as part of a basic benefits package to older Americans, could become available in five years--possibly only through Contract Services or through non-IHS health alliances. That possibility, said a NICOA spokesperson, would not help many rural Indian elders who lack transportation.



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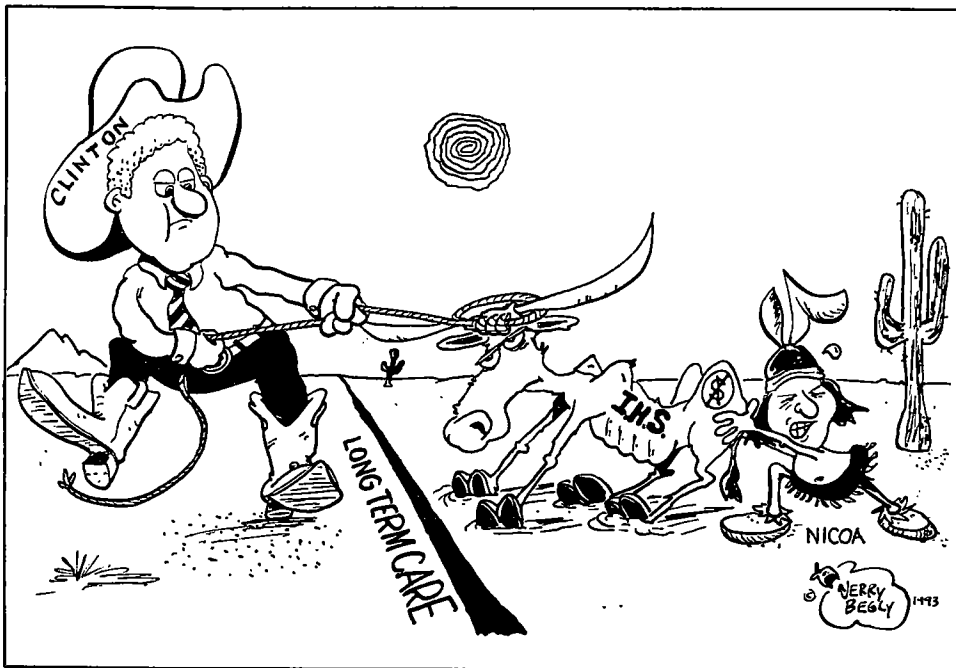
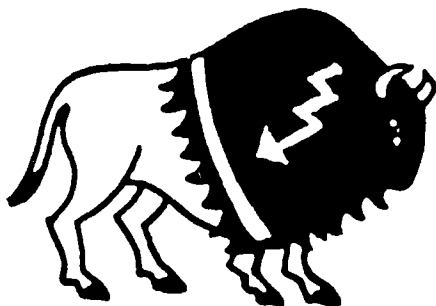
## Hello, is Hillary there?

The first speaker invited to NICOA's '94 conference was, appropriately, the First Lady. A letter inviting Hillary Rodham Clinton to present the keynote address at the Aug. 25-27 conference in Spokane, Wash., was mailed last month.

Despite the dozens of requests that the First Lady receives, we are optimistic that she will accept.

If you would like to see her there, please support our invitation by writing her a short, personal note yourself. Your letter may be more convincing than anything NICOA can say.

Letters can be addressed to:  
*Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton*  
*Office of the First Lady*  
*The White House*  
*1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW*  
*Washington, D.C. 20500.*



## Las Vegas in November

### NIHB conference to target Indian elders

**F**eaturing a keynote speech by IHS director/nominee Michael H. Trujillo, the National Indian Health Board's Nov. 10-12 consumer conference in Las Vegas, Nev., will focus on Indian elders. Other featured speakers include Gaiashkibos, President of the National Congress of American Indians, Andrew Lorentine, chairman of the NIHB, and NICOA executive director Dave Baldrige.

Scheduled at the Las Vegas Hilton, the conference agenda will also feature panels and participation by NICOA board chairman Pat Woods, Bill Benson of the Administration on Aging, and Yvette Joseph Fox of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

The conference will include plenary sessions and workshops on national health care reform, the spiritual role of elders in tribal communities, alcoholism among the elderly, and legislative issues affecting Indian elders.

According to the NIHB, conference rates for elders have been reduced to \$75 for pre-registration (already closed) and \$100 for normal registration. Inquiries and registrations should go to the National Indian Health Board, 1385 S. Colorado Blvd., Suite A-708, Denver, Colo. Phone 303/759-3075.

# 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 NICOA Special Edition prints by Sam English, and a window decal that proclaims my support for Indian elders. THIS MEMBERSHIP FEE PAYS FOR TWO YEARS!

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) \_\_\_\_\_

# Join NICOA Today!!

**It's the best deal in aging . . .  
Two years for the price of one!**

SEE OTHER



SIDE FOR DETAILS

- \* **By joining the National Indian Council on Aging now, your membership will extend a full TWO YEARS!**
- \* **. . . that's only \$5 per year for Indian elders, \$20 for associates, and \$50 for organizations, its the most inexpensive national aging membership in the U.S!**
- \* **At no additional charge, you'll receive:**
  - NICOA's highly-regarded quarterly newsletter, *Elder Voices!***
  - Updates on NICOA activities!**
  - Voting rights (qualified Indian elders only)!**
  - NICOA Conference registration discounts!**
  - A window decal proclaiming your support of Indian elders!**

## Inter-tribal in Albuquerque

### NICOA staff mixes eleven tribes

**A**s the National Indian Council on Aging continues to grow and expand its efforts, the makeup of its staff reflects the inter-tribal status of elder advocacy. Here's a summary:

The buck stops with Executive Director *Dave Baldrige* (Cherokee), who writes grant proposals and testimony, edits publications, guides the organization, and signs the paychecks.

*Frieda Clark* (Chickasaw) directs NICOA's largest venture, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which provides training for more than 300 (hopefully soon to be 600) elders. Her staff consists of State Coordinators for Arizona, *Frankie Thompson*, based in Phoenix; New Mexico/Colorado, *Jolene Siow* (Laguna/Santo Domingo/San Juan/Picuris), based in Albuquerque; and Oklahoma, *Maudean Harden* (Chickasaw). Job developer *Ed Littlecook* (Ponca) has recently joined the staff, and will manage an office in Tulsa, Okla.

*Laura Graham* (Laguna), a licensed social worker, manages NICOA's rural and urban SSI Outreach projects, which have now reached elders in a dozen states. She is assisted by NICOA Secretary/Receptionist *Eva Gardipe* (Pawnee/Sac & Fox/Flathead), who also handles a wide array of membership and grant-related chores.

NICOA's Fiscal Officer, *Patricia Garcia* (Sandia), is busy converting the organization's budgets to a sophisticated new FundWare computer system, relying on Payroll Clerk *Gerlinde Gomez* to provide error-free number-crunching.

## Cheapest club in town

### Memberships good for two years

**A**t the 1992 Green Bay conference, NICOA's membership approved a two-for-one deal. Voting memberships, already available for \$10 yearly, were extended for a second year at no additional cost.

The measure, designed to make NICOA benefits accessible to low-income elders, means that members who joined on August 28, 1992, or later are fully paid through the 1994 Spokane, Wash., conference. Membership cards which show 1993 expiration dates are being replaced with free 1994 cards, according to staffer *Eva Gardipe*. All updated cards will be mailed before yearend, she said.

The NICOA voting membership, which provides four newsletters, updates, conference registration discounts, and a window decal—all for \$5 yearly, is the most inexpensive in the national aging network.

## All Aboard!

The NICOA's '92-93 board and officers are:

*Pat Woods* (Muskogee Area)  
(Chair) 405/436-2603

*James S. Hena* (Albuquerque Area)  
(Vice Chair) 505/881-1992

*Tammy Sixkiller* (Phoenix Area)  
(Secretary) 602/263-1017

*Wendell McLester* (Minneapolis Area)  
(Treasurer) 414/869-2273

*Madeline Colliflower* (Billings Area)  
406/673-3428

*Loretta James* (Portland Area)  
206/659-0213

*Janet Guthrie* (Juneau Area)  
907/886-7191

*Georgia Gallegos* (Anadarko Area)  
405/247-2448

*Kenneth Cody, Sr.* (Navajo Area)  
505/786-7251

*Woodrow Groves* (Sacramento Area)  
916/967-0456

*Marie Rogers* (Aberdeen Area)  
605/342-1706

*Iva Brant* (Central Area)  
716/532-9459

*Sam Stool* (Title VI Directors Assn.)  
918/456-0671



## Notes from Indian elder country

*Preparations for NICOA's '94 conference in Spokane, Wash., will begin in earnest with the hiring of Kesley Edmo as a part-time program specialist . . .*

*NICOA is blocking several hundred Eastern Washington Univ. dorm rooms at \$10.50/night for the conference . . .*

*The Food Research and Action Committee (FRAC) of Washington, D.C., is working with NICOA to generate Indian representation at their Nov. 8-10 Washington, D.C. conference on hunger. For information, call 202/986-2200 . . .*

*The Urban Institute's survey of "Hunger among the Elderly" included 86 NICOA-gathered responses from the pueblos of Isleta, Laguna, and San Juan . . .*

*NICOA's Executive Committee will meet with Asst. Secretary Fernando Torres-Gil in early November . . .*

*A speedy recovery to NICOA SCSEP director Frieda Clark, who underwent emergency surgery in San Diego on October 14.*

**National Indian  
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University takes step toward eldercare

## Indian aging center in Albuquerque

**T**he University of New Mexico's (UNM's) new *American Center on Indian Aging/Information* will begin operations this fall, in partnership with NICOA. Funded by a grant from the Administration on Aging, the Center will immediately undertake a project to assist tribal leaders.

"A number of Indian elder research projects have been completed with tribal cooperation over the past ten years," said NICOA executive director Dave Baldrige. "The results of these projects either haven't been made available to tribal leaders or have been presented in such obscure, academic language that tribes can't use them. We will re-examine and re-write the results of some of these projects, then provide the information to appropriate tribal leaders."

The Center, a cooperative venture between UNM and NICOA, will be located on the university campus, staffed full-time, mostly with volunteer help recruited by Center co-director Helen Kerschner.

A successful director in the aging network for many years, Ms. Kerschner came to UNM last year from Washington, D.C. She also directs the International Society on Aging and serves on numerous boards of directors.

"We're very excited about the Center, and see its first project as the tip of an iceberg," Kerschner commented. We intend to build the ACIA/I into a valuable resource which provides research, training, technical assistance and other services for tribes, elders, and the people who advocate for them."

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