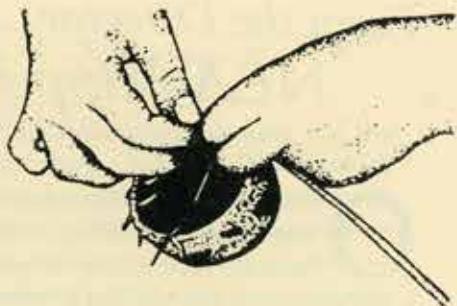




California Indian Basketweavers Association



Newsletter #19
June 1997

16894 China Flats Road, Nevada City, CA 95959 (916) 292-0141

The Beauty of Chumash Basketry

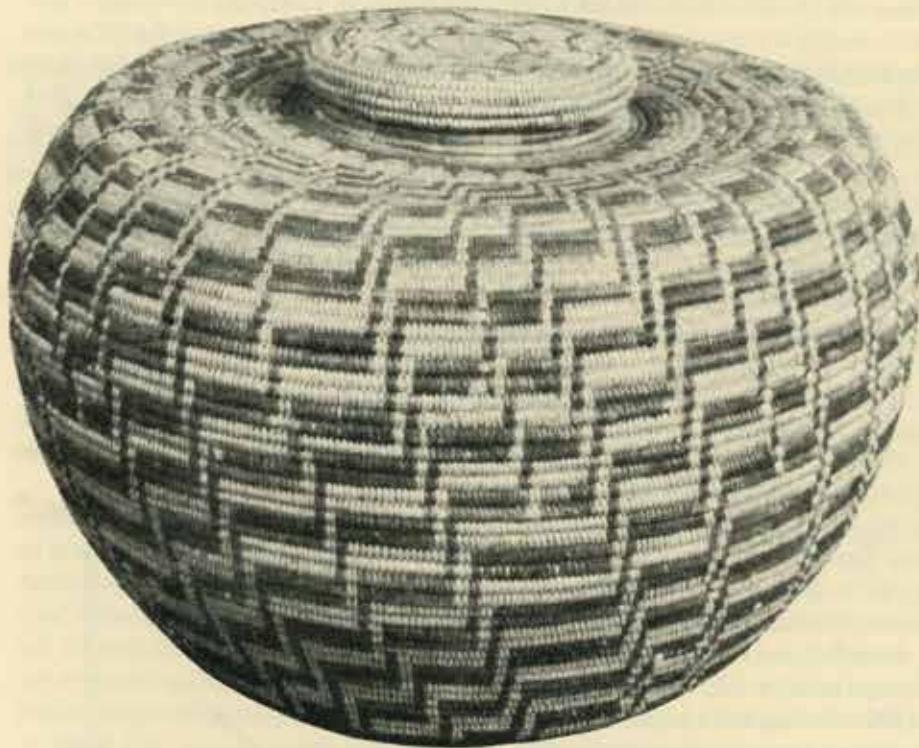


PHOTO BY WILLIAMS DEWEY

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by Jan Timbrook

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at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

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From the Director...

NEA Support of CIBA Attacked in Congress

Sara Greensfelder

On April 9, U.S. Representative Wally Herger (R-Marysville) sent a letter to all of his colleagues in the House of Representatives calling for the elimination of the National Endowment of the Arts, using NEA funding of CIBA as a basis for his position. Reproducing an NEA notice of a \$60,500 grant to CIBA in support of the 1997 and 1998 basketweavers gatherings, and a western regional gathering, Herger wrote to colleagues, "Washington must begin [to] set some spending priorities. This grant announcement for basketweavers is a prime example of why the NEA should be eliminated." His letter began with the heading "NEA FUNDS BASKETWEAVERS" and ended with "IT'S TIME TO ELIMINATE THE NEA," in giant lettering. That's all he wrote—there was no further explanation of why funding basketweavers is a prime reason to get rid of the NEA.

Herger's "Dear Colleague" letter did not go unnoticed. It was mentioned in the next day's Washington Post, New York Times, Philadelphia Inquirer and Santa Fe New Mexican. CIBA responded to the letter with a press release and statements by basketweavers and the executive director on April 11, reflecting a sense of outrage at what was seen as an insensitive belittling of those who are struggling to keep an ancient and revered traditional art form alive. Northern California newspapers and radio stations took up coverage of the story, followed by a wave of newspaper editorials, all but one supportive of the NEA and the CIBA grant. During Senate hearings on the NEA budget and reauthorization, the grant to CIBA was defended by NEA chair Jane Alexander. At an April 24 hearing, the NEA and Native basketry traditions received support from Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-Colorado), who displayed California Indian baskets and spoke of their fine artistry and cultural importance.

All the attention may have become a bit uncomfortable for Wally Herger. On April 16, Herger spokesman Dave Meurer said in a radio interview, "As far as the Congressman is concerned, basketweaving is a wonderful pastime, it's a wonderful hobby and he hopes millions more Americans will take up this productive hobby—and it's probably a better use of time than television—but we just don't see where there's a justification to ask the taxpayer to fund this hobby."

Rep. Herger, in whose district CIBA offices are located, has found it politically expedient to use funding of "basketweavers" as fodder in the all-out war many in Congress are waging against the NEA. Two years ago, conservatives in Congress vowed to eliminate the NEA this year. In the interim, they succeeded in cutting NEA funding by 40%. This year they are working hard to keep their promise to do away with the agency altogether. In the ongoing debate over balancing the federal budget, the NEA has become a whipping boy. California Congressional representatives who have helped to lead the attack on the NEA include Wally Herger, John Doolittle (R-Rocklin) and Frank Riggs (R-Windsor).

I feel strongly about supporting the NEA, in part because the NEA has been a strong supporter of California Indian basketweavers. The NEA funded the uncontested "Gathering of Northern and Central California Indian Basketweavers" back in 1991, which grew into our annual gatherings, led to the formation of CIBA and became a model for similar gatherings around the country. The NEA funded "The Fine Art of California Indian Basketry" exhibition and catalogue and has continued to fund our gatherings as they move about the state, providing the single most significant source of support for CIBA, and thus for the revitalization of California's indigenous weaving traditions. NEA grants are on a matching basis, and provide a big incentive for other private and public funders to contribute. NEA funding helps support major arts institutions, state and local arts agencies and arts education in the schools, and NEA funded projects contribute enormously to the cultural and economic well-being of local communities.

One of the saddest things I've witnessed in my job in the past two years was the downsizing of NEA and the resulting elimination of Folk and Traditional Arts as a distinct program within the agency. I can't heap enough praise on those who guided the program and its accomplishments in preserving and perpetuating the rich and diverse artistic and cultural traditions of this country. It is my hope that in the future the Folk Arts program will be re-instituted.

A Herger spokesman stated that the Congressman "does not believe that in an era of tight federal dollars, basket weaving should have a top priority in Congress." Well, Mr. Herger, basketweaving does not have a top priority in Congress, nor does the NEA, whose current 99.5 million dollar budget is less than 1/100,000 of 1% (one-one hundred thousandth of one per cent) of the federal budget—equivalent to 38 cents per American per year. A Lou Harris poll on the arts conducted in 1996 revealed that 61% of those polled were willing to pay \$5 additional tax to fund the arts federally, and 56% were willing to pay an additional \$10.

The battle rages on in Congress over the future of the NEA. The process is in motion to decide whether to eliminate the NEA, retain its current funding, or increase funding as per President Clinton's request. I would urge all of our readers to contact your U.S. Representative and two U.S. Senators about this issue. (You may very well find their names, addresses and phone numbers in the front section of your phone book.) Perhaps they are holding "town meetings" in their districts in June. Write, call or visit and tell them what you think, ask them where they stand, and ask them to keep you informed of their votes. Do it today! A nation that does not support its artistic heritage is a poor one indeed.

CIBA Fundraiser "Draws" Near

CIBA's 1997 Fundraiser Drawing will take place at this year's Gathering, featuring baskets by the following California Indian basketweavers—Dee Dominguez (Kitanemuk/Ventureño Chumash/Yowlumne), Ollie Foseide (Yurok), LaVerne Glaze (Karuk/Yurok), Pat Hunsucker (Yurok), Tina Johnston (Wintu Norelmuk), Paula McCarthy (Karuk), Thelma McNeal (Yurok), Wilverna Reece (Karuk), Kimberly Stevenot (Northern Sierra Mewuk), Alberta Sylvia (Yurok), Norma Turner (Western Mono) & Kathy Wallace (Karuk/Yurok/Hupa). Plus—artwork, jewelry, books & more. If you can donate prizes, need tickets or more information, please contact Kimberly Stevenot, 2129 Cornwell Avenue, Modesto, CA 95350, (209) 521-6327 or e-mail: Mewuk8@aol.com. This year, every ticket will be included in the "Primary Draw" during the afternoon and in the "Grand Draw" in the evening. The evening "Grand Draw" will be short and sweet to allow more time for dancers and cultural sharing. So buy lots of tickets, sell lots of ticket, and support CIBA's successful annual fundraiser.

1997 Basketweavers Showcase

The 1997 Basketweavers Showcase will be exhibited at this year's California Indian Basketweavers Gathering at the Oakbrook Regional Park Chumash Interpretive Center in Thousand Oaks. All California Indian weavers are invited to participate in this year's Showcase. As in the past, the Showcase is limited to entries by California Indian basketweavers of baskets made entirely of traditional materials, and completed during the past year. You may enter from 1-3 baskets. Entries must be turned in at the Gathering, on Friday, June 27, between 2:00 and 6:00 p.m. This year's Showcase Coordinator is Dee Dominguez (818) 339-6785 and Showcase Curator is Jan Timbrook (805) 682-4711 x307.

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Deadline for submissions for September Newsletter is August 1.

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CIBA
MEMBER PROFILE

Lilly Baker

MOUNTAIN MAIDU



PHOTO BY MICHELLE VERNES

Lilly is pictured here working on a coiled basket at the 1991 California Indian Basketweavers Gathering at Ya-Ka-Ama.

year and gather and then that will keep me going for one year. And then the next year I go again. That's how I do it. I take a cutter and cut all my redbuds and my maple. I use maple for the tight weaving.

I used to use bracken fern, but it's hard to get, and then I have to go through a lot of red tape to get it. When I pick 'em, I put the whole thing in a bucket. And I soak it. And then I take it apart and get the inside. It's easier to get it out if you soak it. Then I scrape it with a knife to get it clean.

I speak my language—Mountain Maidu language. But I'm forgetting because I don't talk it anymore. Nobody to talk to. Well, there's a young fella that's learning and he's doing very well. But most of them don't know the language at all. They completely talk English—even young kids grow up talking English. They don't talk in our language. They don't know their own language and that makes it bad. All the elderly people who know how to talk Maidu are all gone and so the young generation just don't talk. I would like to see 'em keep it, but they don't. They have a book, but even the book doesn't help because I don't think they want to talk it.

They go to school now. And they're well-educated a lot of 'em. And they have good work and everything and they raise their families just like not Indian at all. To speaking, they're altogether English. I feel it's important, but they don't. It would be wonderful if they would. It would help them a lot. They could teach their children and keep the language. I think it's nice to keep your language.

Note: This interview took place at the 1996 CIBA Gathering in Ferndale. If you would like to learn more about Lilly and her baskets, "The Maidu Baskets of Lilly Baker" is a feature article appearing in the Spring 1997 issue of Native Peoples magazine.

Chumash Basketry Materials Preservation Project

The Santa Barbara American Indian Health and Services (AIHS), Los Padres National Forest, and the Central Coast Basketweavers (CCB) proudly announce the Chumash Basketry Materials Preservation Project. The project is an unprecedented partnership between the three groups that will designate areas on the Forest in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo counties which were used by the Chumash people in prehistoric times, and are still being used today by the Chumash and other basketweavers for gathering native plants. The ultimate goal of the project is to continue the tradition of basketweaving, an important aspect of American Indian culture.

The Central Coast Basketweavers is a group of weavers who began meeting in 1995 to learn and practice California Indian basketry techniques. They are dedicated to preserving traditional basketweaving, the native materials, and the lifeway of weavers. They are also dedicated to the preservation and protection of the land and resources for future generations.

American Indian Health and Services provides health services, referrals, and cultural programs to American Indians in Santa Barbara County. Executive Director Seh Welch states, "The Basketry Project is essential in efforts to preserve cultural traditions, and is a major step forward in allowing American Indians to once again become caretakers of the land."

Los Padres National Forest, which covers 1,375,156 acres in the three counties, will work with local California Indians to identify, cultivate, and protect the native plants needed for basketweaving. This partnership is invaluable in establishing ties between the Forest Service and the American Indian community in the Tri-County area.

For more information, please call Debbie Barber at (805) 967-3320.

Chumash Weaver Kimberly Romero of Santa Ynez Reflects on Basketry Class

Seven new Chumash weavers began their basketweaving odyssey last year in a class taught by Dee Dominguez (Kitanemuk/Ventureño Chumash/Yokuch Yowlumne) at Santa Ynez. Kimberly Romero of Santa Ynez reflected back on their class experience and on their weaving today.

"It was good being together with other Chumash women. Three were from Santa Barbara and four from Santa Ynez. It was like therapy. Everyone got to know each other and it felt good. While we were trying to learn, the kids would be coming in and out and in one way that made it hard, but we also thought it was important to include them. So we tried to teach the younger ones at the same time. When we were all sitting together, the outside world didn't phase us. Unfortunately, the reality of work and raising families has made it hard to work on the basketry as much as we would like.

"We are all active in the community, and some have been traveling a lot for cultural reasons. I have six children, and my family dances. Some have been involved with building a *tomol* [a traditional Chumash canoe] in Santa Barbara. Others are going to school, training to be teachers and other things. But even so, everyone is working at trying to continue what we learned. We will get together this summer to gather materials and work on our baskets.

"We went to the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and they took our group through the archives. We pulled out drawers of old baskets. They were so amazing—such good work. And there were the notes from John P. Harrington that could explain the processes.

"Everyone was in awe. I kept thinking, 'I wonder if this was made by someone in my family?' It went to the heart right away."

Videos on Southern California Basketry

Several videos are available on Southern California basketry from the California Indian Arts association(CIA). The videos are of presentations given at CIA meetings and are available to non-members for \$22.75 each (includes shipping & handling). Titles pertaining to basketry are: Dr. Moser & Bill Cain: "Cahuilla Basketweavers"/Justin Farmer: "Diegueño Indian Baskets"/Jan Timbrook: "Chumash Basketry & Culture"/Elizabeth Villas: "Steffa Baskets at Pomona College"/Dr. C. Moser & J. Farmer: "Rattlesnake Baskets"/Jeff Rigby: "Chumash Cave Basketry"/Bill Cain: "Indian Basketry Hats"/Southwest Museum: "Baskets in the Museum Collection." Order from Justin Farmer, 1954 E. Evergreen Ave., Fullerton, CA 92835 (714) 256-1260.

Sierra National Forest to Spray Herbicides

Yet another in a long line of Forest Service approvals of herbicide projects was registered in April, this time by the Mariposa Ranger District, Sierra National Forest. District Ranger Thomas Efird approved the district's "Vegetation Management for Site Preparation and Release of Conifer Plantations" Environmental Analysis (EA) over objections from CIBA, who urged that a no-pesticide alternative be approved instead. Now, spraying of glyphosate on as much as 1,350 acres over the next 3-5 years could begin as soon as early June. A decision to also use hexazinone on another 558 acres was delayed pending the outcome of further "review."

Hexazinone, a systemic agent that leaches readily into waterways over long periods, is proving to be particularly troublesome to the Forest Service. It has been found in streams on the Eldorado National Forest up to 2 years following use, and has been found in concentrations exceeding safe drinking water standards in streams on the Stanislaus National Forest (see Newsletter #16). Apparently due to concerns for worker safety, the Forest Service has discontinued ground application of the granular formulation (Pronone 10G). The Stanislaus is currently the only national forest in California where hexazinone is being used.

The district has indicated they will provide CIBA and local Native Americans with a schedule of herbicide spraying, and will post all units that are sprayed. Local weavers and others who would like to be notified should contact District Ranger Efird at (209) 683-4665.

Caltrans Curtails Spraying in NW California

Tribes and community groups engaged in a long-running battle for herbicide-free public roads achieved a major victory on March 10, when Rick Knapp, District Director for Caltrans District 1, announced that he would not spray toxic pesticides to control vegetation along state highway roadsides in Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino and Lake counties if local boards of supervisors or city councils requested him to not do so. Within weeks, Mendocino and Humboldt county supervisors and the cities of Arcata, Fort Bragg, and Point Arena voted to do just that. The city of Fortuna, however, opted to allow Caltrans spraying. During May, several other jurisdictions, including the cities of Ukiah and Willits, and Mendocino County, were considering taking action under the new policy.

These actions were the culmination of many years of sustained pressure from diverse groups of local and state activists, including Indian tribes. Previously, Caltrans had agreed not to spray along any state highways within the boundaries of the Yurok Reservation, along the lower Klamath River. Round-up, the primary herbicide used by Caltrans, has been linked to a number of public health threats, including eye and skin irritation, nausea, headaches, and muscle weakness. It was the third most reported cause of pesticide-related illnesses in California from 1982-1991. In addition, there is much that is not known about its inert ingredients.

A tactic used successfully by local activists involved individual residents requesting meetings with Caltrans if roadside spraying plans were a concern to them. Under the state Food and Agricultural Code, you may request such a meeting and a representative of Caltrans must meet with you to work out an agreeable solution. Although Caltrans' policy for local determination is currently limited to northwest California, and Caltrans will abide by local government decisions for only a one-year period, tribes and community groups in other parts of California may want to encourage their Caltrans district directors to adopt a similar policy. For more information, including a packet of information on the successful campaign in Mendocino County, contact Bruce Hering at (707) 937-1140.

Indian Country Highlighted in Forest Service Employee Publication

Articles and commentary on current issues in Indian Country are the focus of the March-April Issue of *Inner Voice*, the bi-monthly publication of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics (FSEEE). Featured articles include "Fighting to Save Sacred Places" by Chris Peters, and "Keeping an Art Alive" by Linda Yamane (CIBA's newsletter editor) about California Indian basketweavers. Also featured are opposing viewpoints on whether Native American remains should be given to scientists for study, and an encouraging commentary on the need for the Forest Service to work with tribes. For copies of this issue or to learn more about FSEEE, contact FSEEE at PO Box 11615, Eugene, OR 97440, or at (541) 484-2692.

Chumash Weaver

Gilbert Unzueta



Gilbert is pictured here in front of the Santa Barbara Mission cemetery in May 1994. Photo by Lois Robin.

Next I dry the juncus. It usually takes about three weeks, if the weather's warm. I set it out on the deck and work it every day, turning it. Then I soak it. For the twined bottles I soak it really good. I've been looking at older water bottles because I'm trying to get that tighter twine that they did. I get a good twine work, and it can be water proof, but I can't get that real fine twine we find in the older water bottles. Maybe the juncus was split—that's probably the next thing I'm going to attempt.

The *Juncus textilis*, that's for the coiled baskets. In Chumash coiled baskets, we use *Juncus textilis* and deergrass, but using the *textilis* as a start. I collect it and split it into very fine strands and then tie it for the warp, also using the juncus for the sewing strand. I don't dye my juncus, but collect the juncus with the darker color at the base. I use the darker part for the pattern. The basket I'm working on right now has the stair-step design.

When I did a demonstration at the CIBA Gathering two years ago, a couple of elders came up to me and said that men aren't supposed to be doing the closed basketry weaving. I thought about it, then asked, "How many Chumash basketweavers do you know?" When I first started back in '93, you could probably count on one hand the number of Chumash basketweavers that were out there. Now there's about 40 that I know of in the Santa Barbara area. Of those, there's about five that can do the coil basket really nice now. They're all students that I've worked with, and I sort of feel good about that.

I live in Thousand Oaks and volunteer at the Oakbrook Chumash Interpretive Center. When I started to learn how important basketry was in Chumash culture, I think that's what started me wanting to teach basketry to the women because we needed to keep this part of the culture going. It really did sort of die out and now I see a lot of the weavers come out and work on their baskets and it feels good.

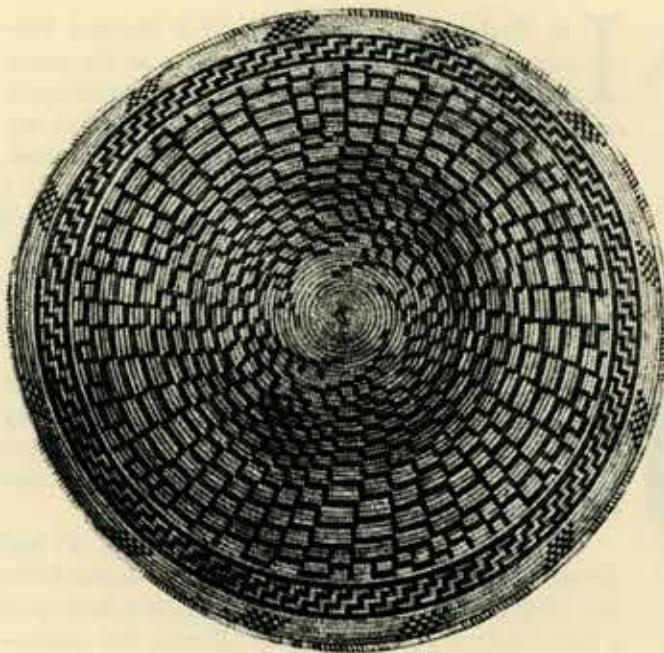
I'm Barbareño Chumash and I started basketry around 1993. I was working at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Anthropology Department as a Curatorial Assistant and my mother and sisters took a pine needle basketry class. I went in and watched them and I started doing it. I had worked with Jan Timbrook and looked at a lot of baskets. Then when I got into the pine needle baskets, I started thinking about the Chumash coiled baskets and the twined water bottles. It was good that I was able to have access to them at the museum. So I studied them a lot and did a lot of reading with Candelaria's notes from John P. Harrington. Then my mother had started a basketry class with Anna Campbell, on the water bottle, and I took the class with them. It just came natural to me.

For our water bottle we use *Juncus acutus*. It's real dangerous when you're collecting it. The *acutus* looks like a big pin cushion—like a porcupine rolled up in a ball. They're just comin' out all over the place—they're stiffer, and they're very, very sharp. You've got to put on long sleeves, gloves, eye glasses, almost a face mask when you gather the stuff!

One time we were walking around gathering the material and we were talking about how the people must have had a way of gathering this without getting poked all over the place. And as we went around this one bush, there was the answer. A quarter of the bush was burned out, like a pie cut, and you could just sit in there, almost inside the plant, and clip your material. It was like—the answer is here, just ask the question!

An Introduction to Chumash Basketry

Jan Timbrook



SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Chumash basket tray, circa 1830. Photo by Travis Hudson.

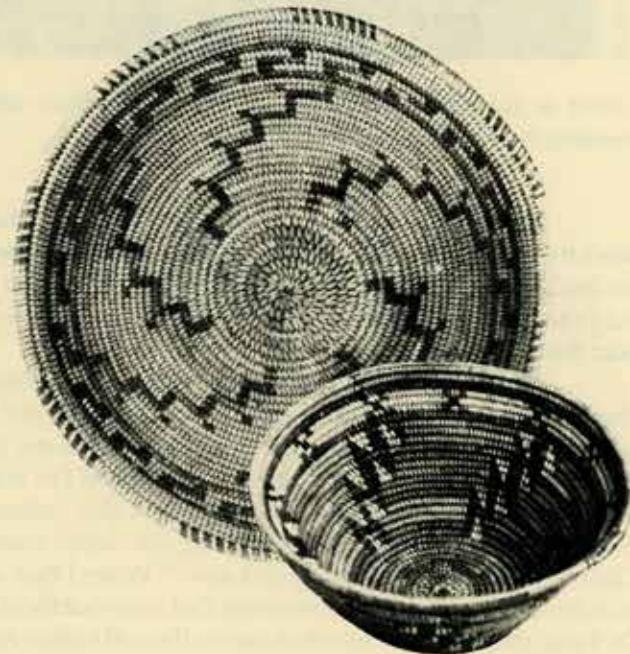
Candelaria Valenzuela, Petra Pico, Donaciana and other old-time weavers were all gone by 1920, but they left a priceless legacy for their descendants today: the baskets themselves. Modern weavers have closely studied dozens of baskets, pored through John P. Harrington's early interviews with basketmakers, learned to work with wild plant materials, and gained strength from the knowledge that they are bringing ancient traditions back to life. Baskets are once again an important part of what it means to be Chumash.

Both twined weaving and coiled basketry are traditional among the Chumash. Water bottles were twined either of whole juncus stems, or with warp and weft of split and twisted tule. Both kinds were coated on the inside with asphaltum. Hard tar was powdered and put into the finished bottle along with small heated stones. The basket was shaken and rotated to melt the tar until the inside of the basket was covered with it; then the rocks were poured out, the basket was filled with water and left overnight to cure before being refilled with fresh water. Other twined types include leaching basins, sieves, fish traps and cradles.

It is for their fine coiled baskets—trays, bowls of all sizes, treasure baskets, and hats—that the Chumash are renowned. These are generally made entirely of juncus rush, with a foundation of three slender juncus rods sewn with split juncus strands. In contrast with other southern California peoples, baskets with deergrass foundation are seldom seen among the Chumash. Information recorded by Harrington indicates that the foundation material, called

Chumash baskets are versatile, strong and beautiful. In earlier days, they played essential roles in all aspects of life—for gathering, storing, preparing and serving food, holding water, keeping money and other valuables, measuring acorns for trade, carrying babies, in gambling, as gifts, and for ceremonies. The Chumash house was much like an upside-down basket. Baskets were a metaphor for life itself. Fernando Librado said the old men told him that the world was like a great, flat winnowing tray—some men move up and some down, and there is much chaff mixed through it all. The very universe of the Chumash was conceptualized as three worlds, each flat and circular like a basketry tray.

The Chumash have long been known for their excellent baskets and exported them to other tribes even in pre-European times. Spanish explorers, later visitors and settlers greatly admired Chumash baskets, which they bought in large numbers and sent as souvenirs to family and friends in all parts of the world. Extraordinary baskets, with coin designs and words of dedication rendered with over 220 stitches per square inch, were made in mission times. The skilled, adaptable Chumash continued to produce baskets despite the cultural upheavals of history.



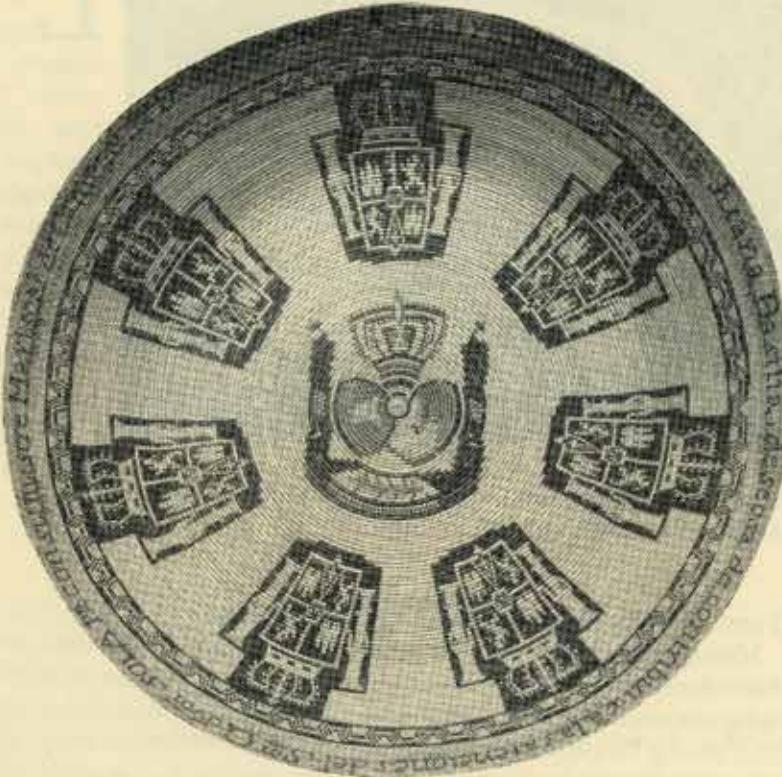
SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Basket cup & small bowl (right). Photos by Travis Hudson.

tash, was *Juncus balticus*, and the sewing was *mekhme'y*, *Juncus textilis*. Weavers today are experimenting with various species.

Many Chumash baskets have a straw-tan background color of the cured juncus, with designs mostly in black. The black color could be obtained by burying the split, untrimmed material in dark mud, or by soaking it in water with acorns and a piece of iron, or perhaps with certain plant dyes. The base of some juncus stalks is naturally a reddish-orange color, used separately to fill in designs or even as the entire background color. The pearly white sewing strands of *shuna'y*, or sumac (*Rhus trilobata*), sometimes provide an accent for the juncus designs. The sewing proceeds to the right, and the ends of the strands are clipped off rather than being tucked under as among groups to the south.

The design layout is very distinctive in Chumash baskets. Most prominent is a "principal band," a sort of border about an inch wide, placed its own width below the rim. The body zone of the basket may have vertical bars, horizontal bands, zigzags or stepped lines spiraling outward from the edge of the base, or an all-over network pattern, always complementing the motifs of the principal band. Some of the geometric design elements are named, including little deer, arms (what are called quail plumes



SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Presentation basket with coin designs, circa 1821. Photo by Dovida Treiman.

among other tribes), points and butterfly. Rattlesnake designs are rarely seen in Chumash baskets, and pictorial figures of humans or animals are not used.

Whatever the designs, they are always light, seeming to float on the surface, not heavy or bulky. Any large dark areas are broken up by placing small light-colored elements inside them, and small diamonds or other fillers are often inserted into large spaces between the major design elements. There may be small filler elements above the principal band, and small blocks of alternating dark and light stitches called "rim ticking" frequently provide the finishing touch in the last row. Even the spectacular presentation baskets with coin designs follow these same conventions.

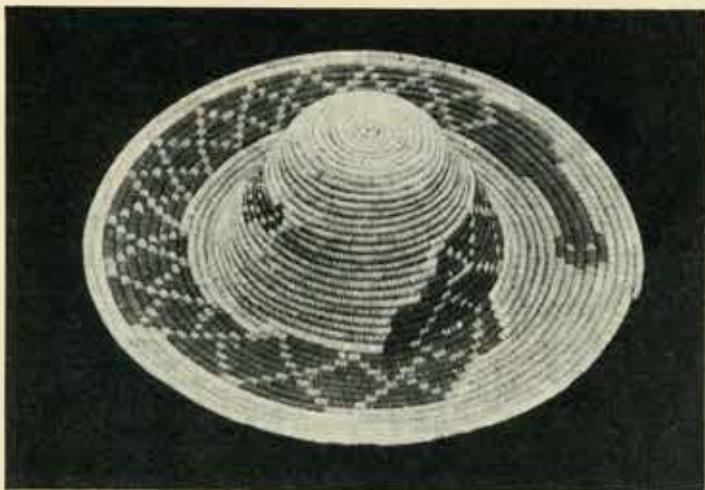
In 1965 it was estimated that there were about 200 Chumash baskets in existence, most in museum collections in this country and Europe. Today, after discovering many more baskets in private collections, we believe that number could perhaps be doubled. The Smithsonian Institution has the largest holdings, with 42 cataloged examples. At the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, which has the second largest collection, native weavers are always welcome to study Chumash and other baskets, especially if you call ahead to make sure staff will be available to help you. In southern California, you can also see fine old Chumash baskets at the Ventura County Museum of History and Art, the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles County Natural History Museum, and the San Diego Museum of Man. It is most gratifying to see these baskets serving as inspiration for new generations of Chumash weavers and to know this art will live again long into the future.



SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Adelina Padilla, Chumash elder from Santa Ynez, holds Chumash basket at Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, March 1997. Photo by Kathleen Conti.

Basketry Symposium at the Southwest Museum



Luiseño hat, courtesy of San Diego Museum of Man. Photograph by Melinda Marchuk.

Last September, the Southwest Museum hosted a two-day symposium exploring the technology, materials and uses of Southern California Indian basketry. We wanted to share a bit of this event with our readers. Panel moderator was basketweaver Justin Farmer (Ipai—Diegueño), who combined his extensive knowledge of Southern California "Mission" baskets with panelists Richard Bugbee (Luiseño), Dee Dominguez (Kitanemuk/Ventureño Chumash/Yokuch Yowlumne) and Jim Phillips. After the Saturday morning panel discussion, activities moved outdoors for hands-on demonstrations of basketweaving and material preparation. Lorene Sisquoc (Cahuilla/Ft. Sill Apache) and Chris Roman joined the panelists as demonstrators. Justin led a material-gathering expedition on Sunday to round out the week-end.

Panelist **Richard Bugbee**, Luiseño from Pauma, is the American Indian Consultant on Ethnobotany and Land Management at the San Diego Museum of Man. He introduced himself by saying: "I'm not a botanist, I'm an Indian who knows about plants." He then described traditional methods of tending the plants, such as harvesting the bunchgrass seeds and burning the grasses regularly to promote growth. New sprouts attracted animals and the smoke from burning benefited trees by driving away harmful parasites. Richard talked about some of the plants used in Southern California basketry—*Juncus textilis*, sumac, bunch grass (deergrass), agave and yucca, also describing how elderberry was used to dye pattern material. As he talked about the plants, and described the many things plants have traditionally provided, Richard said, "Plants are like a living being and we have a relationship with that plant. They're like humans—they just move a lot slower."

Basketweaver **Dee Dominguez** is on the Board of Directors of CIBA (California Indian Basketweavers Association), and focused her presentation on the problems encountered with locating and harvesting the basket plants. She described how urban weavers have explored the creeks and canyons of Southern California, searching for gathering places for deergrass and juncus. "Sometimes weavers are having to travel more than a hundred miles to get materials."

There are also the modern problems of contamination that weavers must consider. "We had an offer from the waste management plant for some deergrass. So I went to check it out before I said, 'Yes,' and the deergrass was just beautiful. Unfortunately, the run-off water was from the waste trucks that was being fed into these plants. This man was really sincere—he really wanted to provide us with these plant materials. But I said to him, 'Would you plant a vegetable garden here and eat the vegetables, knowing that all the water that was being fed these plants was coming off of these waste trucks?' He had a surprised look on his face and said, 'I never realized—I just heard the basketweavers needed materials and I had them here and thought I could just give them to you.'"

"That is another major component of being a basketweaver is insuring that our basket materials are healthy. We put these plants in our mouths and in our hands. We have to have a healthy plant to have a healthy basket."

Jim Phillips is a basket collector and knowledgeable about southern California basketry. He described some of the diagnostic features of these baskets, such as a rightward coil direction and the splicing techniques. Especially enjoyable were his slides of so many beautiful baskets. Some of them were awesome. "Women who wove these baskets had to have a high specialized intelligence to get these complex designs to come out even. Especially when you have to keep adding and subtracting stitches. It is very difficult to keep track of that so that the designs come out even. I think that these ladies, if they were living today, could very well be computer programmers."

Tribes & Agencies to Meet on Pesticide Issues

With guarded optimism, the first tentative steps toward finding possible solutions to the pesticide concerns of northern California tribes were taken last month in Redding, California. State Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) representatives met with members of northern California Indian tribes at the Redding Rancheria to determine the interest of tribes in having meetings in their communities to tell state officials of their concerns and what they wanted done in order to allay those concerns. The day-long "scoping" meeting was hosted and facilitated by staff of the Indian Dispute Resolution Services (IDRS).

The idea for community meetings arose as a result of CIBA's repeated recommendation to EPA and DPR that the first step in addressing the long-standing pesticide concerns of lower Klamath River tribes would be to allow the affected communities to define those concerns, and to recommend solutions and priority areas for research. EPA responded by providing a grant to DPR to hold "facilitated dialogues" between California Indians and the government. DPR has broadened the area to include Sonoma and El Dorado counties northward. Significantly, representatives of the Pit River Tribe were present, and many heard for the first time of pesticide concerns in the northeastern California area. Participating in the scoping meeting, in addition to EPA, DPR and CIBA, were the agricultural commissioners of Shasta and Humboldt counties, Caltrans, the US Forest Service, Seventh Generation Fund, Californians for Alternatives to Toxics, and members or representatives of the Pit River, Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribes, the Redding, Blue Lake, and Cortina Rancherias, and the Quartz Valley Indian Community.

Frustration over a long history of unresolved conflict with government agencies and timber companies over pesticide use was evident at the scoping meeting. Some Native participants doubted that the agencies could ever provide what the tribes really wanted—an end to pesticide use. Pressed to indicate what the agencies thought might come out of the meetings, DPR and EPA representatives foresaw additional information gathering and analyses of exposure risks, possibly leading to regulatory changes in the way the pesticides are used, monitoring, looking at options for pest control, greater public participation in the decision making process, partnerships with people who use alternative pest control measures, funding for research, and "proactive steps" by pesticide users.

A task force was established to coordinate planning for the community meetings. The task force, led by IDRS, will compile background information on pesticides and agency regulations and policies for attendees to review prior to the meeting. Liaisons were identified from the various tribes to work in their communities. Locations tentatively identified for community meetings, to take place over the next several months, are Eureka, Redding, Alturas, Williams, Placerville, and Santa Rosa. CIBA will participate on the task force and do what it can to help assure a positive outcome to the meeting process. For more information on the project, contact IDRS project coordinator Shelly Vendiola at (916) 447-4800, or DPR project manager Kathy Brunetti at (916) 324-4087.

Sierra Pesticide Study Enters New Phase

In March, scientists from the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) began large-scale field sampling for pesticide residues in three national forests of the Sierra Nevada. Researchers hope to determine how long herbicides used in reforestation projects can be detected on-site following spraying. They will also sample areas adjacent to sprayed sites to determine how far from target areas the herbicides can be found. This is the second phase of a study of the herbicides glyphosate, triclopyr, and hexazinone in a forest environment. Last year, DPR conducted laboratory studies to develop methods for measuring the residues, and carried out pilot sampling in the forests to test their ability to find and measure residues on thirteen plant species of importance to California Indian basketweavers and gatherers (see Newsletter #17). The potential for harm to basketweavers and gatherers from exposure to these pesticides in a forest environment was not considered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or DPR when the herbicides were approved for use.

Sampling began in the Stanislaus National Forest (SNF) west of Sonora and will continue there and on the Eldorado and Sierra national forests throughout the spring and summer and into 1998. According to DPR, the Stanislaus is the only forest this year that will be using hexazinone. Hexazinone has been found in high concentrations in stream runoff from last year's spraying, and has been detected for as long as two years after spraying on the Eldorado National Forest.

Results of 1996 pilot field sampling indicated that herbicide residues could be detected for several months after application. They were detected in 45 out of 92 samples from within target areas, and 4 out of 119 samples from outside treated areas. The study is being funded by the US Forest Service in hopes of gaining a better understanding of the fate of the three herbicides in the forest environment, as well as potential exposure to Native gatherers. Those interested in obtaining a report detailing the results of the laboratory testing and pilot field sampling, or a copy of the study protocol for this year's field work, may contact the DPR program supervisor, Dr. Kean Goh, at (916) 324-4072.

CIBA Vision Statement

The purpose of the California Indian Basketweavers Association is to preserve, promote & perpetuate California Indian basketweaving traditions. CIBA accomplishes this in the following ways:

- ▲ By promoting & providing opportunities for California Indian basketweavers to pursue the study of traditional basketry techniques & forms & showcase their work
- ▲ By establishing rapport & working with public agencies & other groups in order to provide a healthy physical, social, cultural, spiritual & economic environment for the practice of California Indian basketry
- ▲ By increasing California Indian access to traditional cultural resources on public & tribal lands & traditional gathering sites, and encouraging the reintroduction of such resources & designation of gathering areas on such lands
- ▲ By raising awareness & providing education for Native Americans, the public, public agencies, arts, educational & environmental groups of the artistry, practices & concerns of Native American basketweavers
- ▲ By promoting solidarity & broadening communication among Native American basketweavers and with other indigenous traditional artists
- ▲ By monitoring public & private land use & encouraging those management practices that protect & conserve traditional Native resources
- ▲ By monitoring & discouraging pesticide use in traditional & potential gathering areas for the safety of weavers, gatherers & others in tribal communities
- ▲ By doing all of the above in a manner which respects our Elders & Mother Earth

Membership

There are two categories of membership in CIBA, please **select one** below. Persons who are of California Indian descent and practice traditional California Indian basketry are eligible to join as Voting members. Anyone else who supports the purposes of CIBA is invited to join as an Associate member. Annual memberships begin from the date dues are received. Checks should be made payable to "California Indian Basketweavers Association" or "CIBA".

I am a California Indian basketweaver. As a **Voting Member** of CIBA, I hereby verify that I am of California Indian descent & that I make baskets using California Indian traditional techniques & materials.

Signature _____ Date _____

I would like to join at the rate indicated below. Check one: New Renewing

\$10 basic/1 year \$20 basic/2 years \$30 basic/3 years
 \$35 supporting other/\$____ \$____ enclosed for ____ yrs. at above rates.

I support the purposes of the California Indian Basketweavers Association and would like to join as an **Associate Member** at the rate indicated below. Check one: New Renewing

\$20 basic \$100 supporting
 \$10 student/low-income \$250 supporting
 \$35 supporting other supporting
 \$50 supporting \$____ enclosed for ____ years at above rates.

All members please complete the following: Name _____

Tribe(s), if any _____

Address _____ zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Skills/Time I could offer the CIBA: _____

Events...

COURTESY OF THE OAKLAND MUSEUM



Through August 3

Memory & Imagination—The Legacy of Maidu Indian Artist Frank Day

Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak St., Oakland. Exhibit of 50 of Frank Day's finest paintings plus historical photographs & Maidu artifacts. (510) 238-3842 or 238-3401.

Through September 14

Forever Creating—Native Art as Life

Mendocino County Museum, 400 E. Commercial St., Willits. Wed.-Sun. 10-4:30. (707) 459-2736.

Through December 28

Everyday People—Photographs from the Native American History Project

Mendocino County Museum, 400 E. Commercial St., Willits. Wed.-Sun. 10-4:30. (707) 459-2736.



Three Exhibits at the Mendocino County Museum.

California Indian Basketweavers Association

Through February 22, 1998

Fibers & Forms—Native American Basketry of the West
San Diego Museum of Man, 1350 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego. Open daily 10-4:30. More than 400 baskets, with a special section featuring baskets from San Diego County. Basketry demonstrations. (619) 239-2001.



PHOTO BY OWEN MCCOLDRICK

From "Fibers & Forms" exhibit at the San Diego Museum of Man

Through The Year 2002

Keeping the Promise—Pomo Basketmakers & the Elsie Allen Collection

Mendocino County Museum, 400 E. Commercial St., Willits. Wed.-Sun. 10-4:30. (707) 459-2736.

July 26-27

Wa She Shu It Deh, Festival of Native American Arts

Tallac Historic Site, S. Lake Tahoe. Saturday: Basket judging. Sunday: Basket awards. Both days: Native American dancing, singing, arts & crafts, hand games, foods. Sponsored by the Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California. (702) 265-4191.

August 4-7

Indigenous Environmental Network 9th Annual Conference

Fort Belknap Reservation, Montana. (218) 751-4967 or ien@igc.ap.org

August 14-17

Great Lakes Native Basket & Quillbox Makers Gathering

Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. Sat. & Sun. afternoons will feature demonstrations & sales, as a part of the Michigan Folklife Festival. Parts of the Gathering are by invitation, others open to the public. Contact Cameron Wood at Nokomis Learning Center (517) 349-5777.

August 29-September 28

Chaw'Se Native American Invitational Art Show

Chaw'Se Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park, 14881 Pine Grove-Volcano Rd., Pine Grove. A special invitation has been issued to California Indian basketweavers, who are encouraged to participate in this year's exhibit, which will focus on California traditional & contemporary art. Applications due June 30. Contact Carma Berglund at the Amador County Arts Council (209) 223-5145.

New & Renewing CIBA Members...

Voting

George Biscarra, *Chumash*
Lydia Bojorquez, *Costanoan*
Leo Carpenter, Jr., *Hupa/Yurok/Karok*
Lorencita Carpenter, *Hupa/Yurok/Tewa*
Kathy Chase, *Maidu*
Miranda Chase, *Maidu-Tsnungwe*
Georgia Garcia, *Gabrielino/Tongva*
Georgia Grace Dick, *Paiute*
Leona Dick, *Paiute*
Michael Duro, *Diegueño/Mesa Grande Reservation*
Paula Horne, *Hupa*
Virginia "Ginnie" Larson, *Karuk/Yurok*
Lavena Lincoln, *Yuki*
Kathryn Montes-Morgan, *Kitanemuk/Yokut*
Wilverna Reece, *Karuk*
Theresa Richau, *Gabrielino/Tongva*
Maureen Shuman, *Karuk*
Thieta Singleton, *Hupa*
Lorene Sisquoc, *Mt. Cahuilla/Ft. Sill Apache*
Audrey Smith, *Maidu**
Ruby Hamilton Jean Vargas, *Wukchumni*
Cordelia Williams, *Hopland Sanel Pomo*
Louise Williams, *Tule River*

Associate

Mary Bates Abbott*
Lori Allessio*
Bob Beckwith*
Ellen M. Cahill
Karen Cox*
Peter Coyote*
Diane de Avalle-Arce
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Joan Erickson
Martha Falkenstien
Marta Frausto
Louise Griffin
James R. Hensher
John Holland
Jacqueline Hoyt*
Indian Arts and Crafts Board - BIA*
David S. Johnson*
Susan Ketchersid*
Mary Kwart
Carla Hills & Frank LaPena, *Wintu**
Carol Laughton*
David Ludwig
Kathy Martinez, *Achumawi*
Sylvia McKenzie*
Suzanne A. McMeans*
Sandy Metzler*
Adrienne C. Micco, *Seminole/Creek/Choctaw*
Gail Morris

Judy Mulford

Anna Murra
Charline Owings, *Metis*
Marcus Peters, *Ojibwe*
Prunuske Chatham, Inc.*
Richard Radcliff
Lois S. Rainwater
Rosie Ramirez, *Chumash/Yaqui*
David & Barbara Risling
Laura Sanders
Marianne Schonfisch*
Betty Shannon
Frances Shaw*
James & Anita Shearer
Dale Ann Sherman, *Yurok/Tolowa/Karuk/Hupa*
Lori Slichton-Williams
Ann King Smith
Beverly Snyder
Madeline Solomon
Southwest Museum*
E. Duane Steen
Karen Van Epen*
Gwen J. Walter*
Nancy Peterson Walter
Annie Whittey
Kathryn Wild
Julie Wilder, *Karuk*
Lynda Winslow

*denotes Supporting Member

What's Happening...

▲ Next Board meeting: September 6-7 in Sacramento or the Bay Area.

▲ **Gladys McKinney, Kathy Wallace & Cassandra Hensher** attended a Pesticide Safety Training session sponsored by the Stanislaus National Forest on February 24 & held at the Miwok Ranger Station. Gladys went on to observe the aerial application of hexazinone on the Forest on March 19. She reports that both the training & observation were extremely helpful in understanding the use of pesticides. CIBA hopes to set up a pesticide training workshop, open to all members, sometime this year.

▲ On March 14, **Kathy Wallace** participated in a panel entitled "Risk Assessment and Native Americans" at the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference in Eugene, Oregon.

▲ A number of CIBA member basketweavers participated in a workshop at Humboldt State University on March 26 on "Our Basket Caps", as a part of the exhibit "Her Mind Made Up—Weaving Caps the Indian Way" of basket caps from Northwest California. LaVerne Glaze spoke about CIBA at the all-day event.

▲ **Gladys McKinney** took part in a panel on "Presenting Ethnic Cultures" at the Living Roots Conference of Folk and Traditional Arts on April 11 in Los Angeles.

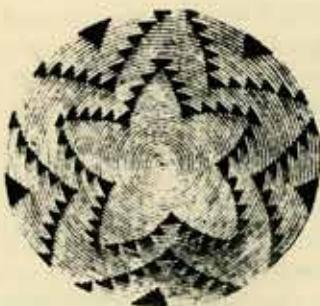
▲ **Jacquelyn Ross** talked to students about CIBA at Yuba College in Woodland on April 25 as part of their cultural day activities. She also represented CIBA in a forum on "Toxic Waste on Native Lands" on May 7 at Sacramento City College.

▲ CIBA's land use policy coordinator **Steve Nicola** took part in the sixth annual California Pesticide Organizing Conference hosted by the Pesticide Watch Education Fund at UC Berkeley from May 2-4.

▲ **Jennifer Bates, Kathy Wallace & Gladys McKinney** participated in a workshop on intercultural training conducted by Indian Dispute Resolution Services on May 2 as a part of the Tribal Relations Conference sponsored by the Stanislaus National Forest. They report that it was very helpful in learning how to communicate effectively with government agencies.

▲ Pomo basketweavers **Gladys Gonzales & Josephine Wright** were honored at "A Day Under the Oaks" at Santa Rosa Junior College.

1997 CIBA Gathering to be Held June 27-29 in Thousand Oaks



The 1997 California Indian Basketweavers Gathering will be held June 27-29 at the Oakbrook Regional Park Chumash Interpretive Center, 3290 Lang Ranch Parkway in Thousand Oaks. Friday is open only to California Indian basketweavers and their guests. Saturday is open to the public and activities will include the Fifth California Indian Basketweavers Showcase, a CIBA Photo Exhibit from past Gatherings, a panel discussion on Access to Gathering Sites on Public and Private Lands, progress reports, demonstrations of California

Indian basketry and related arts, CIBA's fundraiser drawing, Southern California Indian dancers & cultural sharing. Sunday is open to all and will include CIBA's annual meeting, time to meet the candidates for election to the Board, and a closing circle with dancers. Join us for our 7th Gathering! Food will be available. Please note: No alcohol or pets. Questions? Contact the CIBA office at 16894 China Flats Rd., Nevada City, CA 95959, (916) 292-0141, or e-mail: ciba@oro.net. Volunteers are needed! If you can help, call Michael Garitty at (916) 292-3701.



▲CALIFORNIA INDIAN BASKETWEAVERS ASSOCIATION▲

16894 China Flats Road, Nevada City, CA 95959

Address Correction

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