

Merry Christmas! and HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE NEWS CARRIER

# QUECHAN NEWS

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**Look For This Symbol**

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# Quechan V.P. Attends Washington Conference

Quechan Vice President Ronda Aguerro departed Indian Hill after a full day of work on November 30th, to fly to Washington, D.C. and represent her fellow Tribal members at the 3rd annual White House Tribal Nations Conference on December 2nd, 2011.

Widely covered by the national news media at the end of the weekly news cycle, the annual conference is designed to further strengthen the government to government relationship between the Obama Administration and all 565 federally recognized tribes.

Although the White House stated that "the Department of the Interior graciously offered its main auditorium to host this important event," even that building was just big enough to accommodate only one representative from each tribe. However, that stipulation fit well with the Quechan Tribe's needs, due to the Tribal Council's heavy load of regular work sessions, administrative meetings and end-of-the-year budgetary sessions as they pre-



**President Barack Obama is joined onstage** by his "adopted" Native American "parents", Hartford "Sonny" Black Eagle and Mary Black Eagle, during the 2011 Tribal Nations Conference in Washington on December 2, 2011.  
Official White House Photo by Pete Souza

pare for the start of the new year. With President Escalanti tied up on other projects, it was an easy decision to send Vice President Aguerro to this important national meeting, to serve as the sole official representative of the Quechan Tribe.

The goal of the event was to provide leaders from America's 565 federally recognized tribes the opportunity to interact directly with members of the Obama administration, in-

cluding the President, according to the White House Press Office. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, and Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director Heather Higginbottom were all in attendance.

Regretfully, due to the volume of inquiries and time constraints cited in regard to

President Obama's schedule, the White House was unable to consider any requests by Tribal delegates for short, personal meetings with the President. It is not known if any Tribal representatives were able to arrange any time with the other three federal officials listed by the White House, either.

That meant all of the Native representatives gathered in the the Sidney R. Yates Auditorium at the Department of the Interior for the opening session, before being able to attend regional briefings and listening sessions on various federal policies and decisions over November 30th and December 1st. Those sessions were held in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. With the briefing for Native representatives from the Southwest, Navajo and Western Regions set for 9:30AM to 11:00 AM on December 1st, Vice President Aguerro was able to make it to the Conference in time to hear the details on matters pertaining to the Quechan Tribe.

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