

# Split by ideologies in life, Nevadans now share hall

BY GERALDA MILLER

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With her right hand extended holding a shell flower and the skirt of her native dress swaying, Sarah Winnemucca has found her way back to Washington, D.C., which a former University of Nevada, Reno history professor says has "delicious irony."

The statue of Sarah Winnemucca, a 19th-century Paiute who was a teacher, lecturer and a scout and interpreter for the Army, will be dedicated today in the U.S. Capitol's National Statuary Hall.

The statue is the second to represent Nevada.

U.S. Sen. Patrick McCarran, who served four terms from March 4, 1933 until his death Sept. 28, 1954, was

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## Nevadans/Paiute woman, former senator in hall

From 1A  
honored with the first statue in  
1960.

There are great polarities between Winnemucca and McCarran.

While Winnemucca, the first American Indian woman to write her autobiography, was fighting for the rights of her people, McCarran fought a long fight to take land from her tribe.

"He tended to demean Native Americans," said Jerome Edwards, professor emeritus of history at UNR. "He thought of Native Americans as second-class citizens."

State archivist Guy Rocha said McCarran was a very powerful senator who channeled a lot of money to Nevada. And with the threats of the Cold War, he was very popular.

"There still would be a very vocal neoconservative position of this country that would say he was a hero and still is a hero," Rocha said. "McCarran had people who worshipped him. He represented conservative American values."

Winnemucca, whose name as a child was Thocmetony, opened a bilingual school in Lovelock and lectured for peace and equal rights across the country. During the Bannock War, she served as a scout, guide and interpreter for the Army.

"And she did all these things she did on her own," said Sally



PHOTO PROVIDED BY RYAN MCGINNNESS

A statue honoring former U.S. Sen. Patrick McCarran sits in National Statuary Hall in the Capitol.

Zanjani, who wrote the biography "Sarah Winnemucca."

"I can't think of anyone who compares to Sarah Winnemucca, certainly no Indian woman."

As spokeswoman for the Paiute band called the Kuyuidika-a that inhabited around Pyramid Lake, Winnemucca traveled to Washington, D.C., in 1880 and met with President Rutherford Hayes and Interior Secretary Carl Schurz.

"What she wanted was peace between the races," Edwards said

of Winnemucca's dialogue that was often misunderstood by both whites and American Indians.

Winnemucca married two white men, Zanjani wrote.

Edwards said: "Whites thought she (Winnemucca) was too native and Native Americans thought she was too white."

Zanjani said that "Winnemucca did not lose heart and hope."

"I think that Sarah Winnemucca is someone who without any doubt that we can be proud of. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for Sen. Pat McCarran. I think it's great that Nevada has someone like Sarah Winnemucca to counterbalance him."

A.J. Liebling, in his book "A Reporter at Large: Dateline: Pyramid Lake, Nevada" detailed McCarran's personal attempt to protect five Italian immigrant families that claimed some of the best agricultural land at Pyramid Lake.

Michael J. Ybarra devotes a chapter to this endeavor in his recently published biography, "Washington Gone Crazy, Senator Pat McCarran and the Great American Communist Hunt."

Rocha said McCarran believed the American Indian was the loser to pioneers who fulfilled their quest of manifest destiny, the concept of expansion and land acquisition in the

United States.

"His point of view was the Indians should be grateful for what they got as a conquered people," Rocha said. "And he had a lot of supporters."

McCarran understood the Italian immigrants because his father was an Irish immigrant who built a homestead ranch in 1862 alongside the Truckee River.

From 1937 to 1954, McCarran introduced a bill on the first day of each new legislative session to "give the disputed land to the squatters for a small fee," Ybarra said in his book of the nine bills. "And as long as legislation was pending, the Justice Department could not evict the families."

McCarran also was a close associate of U.S. Sen. Joseph McCarthy, who Edwards said was "ruthless" in his methods of dealing with alleged Communists. However, McCarran, an ultra-conservative Democrat, was a powerful advocate for Nevada, Edwards said.

While Winnemucca's historical reputation has "resurrected," Edwards said, McCarran's standing has declined in the past 50 years.

"She was a woman of great stature, and I think Nevadans should be proud she is in Statuary Hall," he said. "I'm not saying that the Pat McCarran statue should be hauled down, but it is deliciously ironic."