

# TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

## Prevention, con't from page 9

Crossroads Program reviewed domestic violence prevention.

Terry McDowell and a group of community members came all the way from the Portland and Salem areas. Buzz Berry and Randy Austin shared songs and knowledge of ceremonial traditions. Idea Screen Printing, Siletz Tribal Elders, Tobacco Prevention, and Alcohol/Drug Prevention donated funds for T-shirts for participants. Frank Simmons donated salmon and elk meat, and Sandy Gordon, Sue George, Anna Becerra, Robert Kentta, George Nagel, and Janet Dair cooked the meal for the participants.

As a result of this gathering, the Alcohol and Drug Program staff hope to join with other tribal programs in sponsoring quarterly gatherings. This will be a time for people from Siletz, Salem, Portland, Eugene, and other communities to gather together, get to know each other, have fun, and support each other's efforts to live "well."

Watch for announcements about the next Wellbriety activity. If you are interested in making sure that you are informed, you may call 541-444-8286 or 1-800-600-5599.

## Prevention Dimension Calendar

- Oct. 7 Title IX Indian Education Pow-Wow, South Eugene High School
- Oct. 23 Town Hall (Underage Drinking) Meeting, State Capitol, Salem
- Oct. 25 Madish (Nadosh - feather wand) class - Siletz
- Oct. 26 No school (LCSD)
- Oct. 28 Prevention Halloween Dance, Siletz Grange
- Nov. 4 Eugene Indian Education/JOM Pow-Wow, Sheldon High School
- Nov. 7 Don't forget to vote. Your vote counts!
- Nov. 11 Chemawa Veterans Pow-Wow, Salem
- Nov. 17 Siletz School Restoration Pow-Wow
- Nov. 17 Wellbriety Walk to Dinner, Government Hill, Siletz
- Nov. 18 Restoration Pow-Wow, Chinook Winds Casino, Lincoln City
- Dec. 2 Lane Community College Pow-Wow, Eugene

## General Council Meeting

Nov. 4, 2000  
Siletz Community Center  
Government Hill - Siletz, Oregon

### Agenda

1 p.m.	General Council Concerns
Call to Order	Economic Development Report
Invocation	Candidates' Statements
Roll Call	Chairman's Report
Approval of Agenda	Announcements
Approval of Minutes - Aug. 5, 2000	Adjournment

## Alcoholism: A Blinding Blight on Indian Country

by Jiselle Halfmoon

Alcoholism is known to the experts as a disease. Like a disease, you can predict its course and it has recognizable symptoms. The highest alcoholism groups in the U.S. are the Native Americans and the Inupiat.

Some 6.6 million children live in households with at least one alcoholic parent. Children of alcoholics are more likely to become alcoholics, no matter how they are raised.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, natives refused to drink to intoxication and had no respect for the white men who did. Now it seems the other way around. In 1803, our alcohol use was such a dilemma that the U.S. government outlawed selling or trading alcohol to Native Americans. In 1953, it was reinstated to us. That day should have been an indelible day in our history because it basically was the start of our own holocaust.

To Native Americans, alcoholism is a type of obscure initiation into the social world. Most are proud to be drunks and even encourage it.

Alcohol makes you a person you are not. You black out and do things you would not normally do while sober. Blacking out basically means "the lights are out, but nobody's home." If alcohol came in a pill, it would be a tranquilizer and it would only be available by prescription.

Alcohol also starts to change you in a gradual sense. Eventually it turns you into a dark person who just doesn't care anymore. Some people take it out on their families, mainly the kids. Children cannot help your hangover, only you can.

Many people have a lot to say about alcohol because of their experiences. They talk the talk, but don't walk the walk. You can look at the facts and think you might need to quit, but changes are not random or accidental. "You must actively participate in the development of your own potential." Alcohol will kill the alcoholic one way or another. Only 15 percent of those with this disease seek treatment.

Today in Native America, there are no male role models in most Native American families. This is so mostly because alcoholics are much like children. They are immature, uncontrollable, and compulsive. Hard-core alcoholics cannot handle responsibility, so they hide from it.

Where does that leave us today? We have this gap in our community and nobody seems to care. We are quick to blame, but refuse to look at ourselves.

As long as this disease has been going on, only a handful of each generation has been trying to make change. How long this disease goes on only depends on how long people are willing to live their lives for others. When they are willing to stand up for themselves, and say no to peer pressure and stop being puppets, this cycle can cease.

Alcohol also causes blindness. The blindness to see your wrongdoings, the blindness to see your family's pain, and the blindness that prevents you from seeing a better path.

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