

Changes to GED Test Begin January 2002

Thousands of test-takers are affected by the change and need to finish testing by Dec. 31, 2001

Changes to the General Education Development (GED) program have the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development hurrying to locate some 10,000 people who began work toward their certificate.

Finding those individuals who have started but not yet completed the five tests is proving to be a difficult task. More than 9,400 postcards were sent out as reminders and of those, 2,050 were returned because people have moved. The office is experiencing a flood of calls with more than 500 people calling to find out about testing sites or to correct information.

"We have some 10,000 people who have completed one or more of the five tests and are in jeopardy of losing those scores if they do not finish before the end of 2001," said GED Administrator Sharlene Walker, "And we don't want anyone falling through the cracks."

Adults in Oregon who are working toward their GED certificate have until Dec. 31, 2001, to successfully complete it. In January 2002, the GED Testing Service in Washington, D.C., will release new tests to replace the current edition. Any GED candidate who has not successfully completed the GED by then must start again with the 2002 Series GED Tests to qualify for an Oregon GED certificate. Those who do not pass all five tests will have to start over, including paying the testing fee. Those taking the Spanish-language version of the test will have until 2003.

Oregon testing sites are asking people who sign up to test now – with only six months until the deadline – to sign a waiver acknowledging that they understand the time line. Some people may want to wait for the new test if they are concerned about passing all five tests by the Dec. 31 deadline.

Test design specialists recommended against permitting a combination of old and new scores because the new GED tests differ significantly from the current ones. For example, the new tests will use real-life "authentic" materials – editorial cartoons, graphs for economic data, and business memoranda – to a greater extent.

The new GED tests will continue to measure the lasting outcomes of a four-year high school course of study in writing skills, language arts reading, social studies, science, and mathematics. The tests will incorporate the most up-to-date, widely used curriculum standards and standardized assessment practices available. Graduating high school seniors will continue to set the benchmark by which passing scores are set.

Persons who need information about GED testing or previously earned test scores in Oregon should call 503-378-8648, ext. 373. Persons needing information about local testing sites or preparation classes can call the Oregon Literacy Hotline at 1-800-322-8715. For more information on the GED in Oregon, see www.literacynet.org/gedframe.html.

The Sacred Salmon Ceremony

by Diane Henkels

This weekend (June 9-10), my husband and I attended the Sacred Salmon Ceremony in Ruch, Ore. I had seen this advertised throughout the Siletz Tribal administration building. The name "Sacred Salmon Ceremony" concerned me. Was it just for Indian people; should non-Indian people attend? But I learned before going and while I was there that anyone can (and does) attend, just as "everyone eats salmon."

People gathered at Tanaka Flats, a former Indian village now on Forest Service land on the Applegate River. The Takelma people called this place home. A few hundred people gathered, camping or coming just for Saturday. The camp's activity felt like life in the old village might have felt: preparations for celebrating and blessing the salmon, kids running around, people coming and going.

The morning started with a prayer of thanks and a welcome around an eagle staff. After a hearty breakfast, people attended to jobs, setting up tents, digging the salmon pit, minding kids, and cooking. Others gathered wood and tended the fire for the sweat lodge where the divers purified themselves.

Drumming and flute playing helped the day flow into afternoon, sunny and warm. The salmon, donated by Chinook Winds, was prepared. Drawing from her knowledge of tradition, Agnes Baker-Pilgrim, a tribal member, wiped the salmon with certain forest ferns. Pieces from the whole salmon cooked over hot coals glowed in the fire pit. Everyone received a piece of the cooked salmon. We ate and returned all the bones, which were placed on cedar boughs held up by four divers.

Followed by the other men, the divers walked a blessed trail down the bank to the river, each keeping a salmon bone under his tongue. Drummers drummed. Then I heard that the divers dove deep into the cold water and buried the salmon bones under the rocks, "returning the bones to the river."

Meanwhile, we women circled around the cooking pit and prayed. I found tears streaming down my cheeks as I circled and contemplated what was happening. The dry grass under our feet, crackling fire, and hot sun accentuated the feeling that taking care of the water and the earth is important to the salmon and our balance here.

As always at a Siletz salmon feast, we stuffed ourselves on delicious salmon and other potluck foods we all brought with us. After the meal, the speeches were few and short. I hadn't heard Bruce Babbitt's name once during the day, until then. Fulfilling his politician's promise, he attended the ceremony and during his brief talk, encouraged people to attend local hearings that will help determine the fate of the nearby national monument. Agnes retold the Native creation story.

We stayed at the Flats for a late dinner and visiting, then returned to our campsite under a star-filled sky.

Passages

We would like to wish Justin Hoover a happy 15th birthday on July 11. Happy Birthday, Justin. We love you.

Love, Dad, Daryllyne, and Jordan

Happy Birthday to Justin Hoover on July 11.

From Dennis and Lil' Ron

Happy Birthday to my big brother, Justin Hoover, on July 11.

Love, Jordan

Happy Birthday to our uncle, Louis, on July 7. Hope you have a great one!

Love, Dennis, Lil' Ron, and Jordan

I would like to wish my beautiful daughter, Fawn Metcalf, a very happy birthday on July 22. I think of you a lot and hope that you are doing well. Hope the grandbabies are in good health. I know they are happy babies. Hope you and Mike are doing great. Keep your spirits up and stay happy as a family. Thinking of you!

Love, your mother

Happy Birthday to my favorite brother, Louis Keene, on July 7. Getting up there, huh!

Love, Daryllyne and Max

Happy Birthday big sister, Fawn Metcalf. Haven't seen you yet, but still love you!

Love, Jordan

Happy Birthday to my biggest sister, Fawn Metcalf, on July 22. I love you, sister.

Love, Lil' Ron

Happy Birthday to my sister, Ramona L. You know who you are, Mona L. I love you. Hope you have a great day!

Love, your Sis

Happy Birthday to Auntie Mona on July 30. We love you!

Love, Dennis, Lil' Ron, and Jordan

We would like to thank our wonderful little niece, Tacey Casey, for putting all her time and effort in the grandchildren collages. They couldn't have been done any better! Thank you, Tacey!

Love, all your aunts and uncles

Revival!

Speaker: "Read Leaf" (Lakota)
July 9-12, 2001, at 6 p.m.
Siletz Tribal Community Center