

## NOTICES

### Agencies Agree to Improve Health Care for Veterans

Rural American Indians and Alaska Natives who served in the military will receive enhanced medical care as a result of a new agreement by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi and Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy G. Thompson recently announced a formal agreement that will encourage cooperation and resource sharing between the two agencies to make sure American Indians or Alaska Native veterans receive quality health care.

"VA and HHS are setting the stage for an ongoing collaboration to provide optimal health care for more than 165,000 American Indian and Alaska Native veterans," Principi said. "We are combining our strengths and expertise to improve health care for these veterans, particularly to increase access and enhance services."

While there have been localized efforts between VA health care facilities and Indian Health Service (IHS) clinics in the past, this agreement will encourage additional agency-wide cooperation, affecting all Indian nations.

"Our two departments have a history of working together to care for America's veterans and underserved communities," Thompson said. "Under this new agreement, the Indian Health Service and VA will work to improve health care for our American Indian and Alaska Native veterans by sharing information, developing health promotion programs and allowing for joint appointments, financial reimbursements, and provider certification."

VA Deputy Secretary Dr. Leo S. Mackay Jr. and HHS Deputy Secretary Claude A. Allen formally signed the memorandum of understanding in February at the National Congress of American Indians winter session in Washington, D.C.

In addition, the agreement between VA and HHS will improve communication between the agencies and tribal governments and create opportunities to develop strategies for sharing information and information technology. The technology sharing will include VA's electronic medical record system, bar code medication administration and telemedicine. VA and IHS will co-sponsor continuing medical training for their health care staffs.

VA operates the largest integrated health care system in the United States, providing a broad spectrum of medical, surgical and rehabilitative care for veterans. Nearly 4.3 million veterans received care in VA health care facilities in 2002.

The mission of the Indian Health Service, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is to raise the physical, mental, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest levels. The IHS operates a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 1.6 million members of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.

#### Siletz Valley Partnership

### Incentives Available at Meetings

The Siletz Valley Partnership has a limited amount of incentives for residents of Siletz Tribal housing (one per adult member and one for each child in family) who attend and share at the following meetings (for more info: 541-444-8342):

**City Council:** Second Monday of each month, 7:30 p.m. – City Hall

**Work Sessions:** Fourth Monday of each month, 6:30 p.m. – City Hall

**Siletz Park & Rec.:** Third Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m. – City Hall

**Siletz Valley Partnership:** Fourth Monday of each month, 7 p.m. – Grange

**Friends of the Siletz Library:** Third Thursday of each month, 7 p.m. – City Hall

For more information or to sign up for Friends of the Siletz Library, visit the library. Hours are Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. – 8 p.m., Thursdays 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Fridays 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Saturdays 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., or call 541-444-2855, or e-mail [siletz@mail.crsn.lib.or.us](mailto:siletz@mail.crsn.lib.or.us).

### Registration Open for Paddle Oregon 2003

This year's Paddle Oregon canoe and kayak voyage will travel some 119 miles from Marshall Island Access outside Eugene, Ore., to Newberg, Ore. It will take place on Sept. 8-12, 2003.

Paddle Oregon provides all trip logistics, catered food, luggage shuttle, naturalists,

guest speakers in the evenings, entertainment, and opportunities to learn how to paddle canoes and kayaks.

Paddle Oregon is an annual event of Willamette Riverkeeper, an organization that works on water quality and habitat in the Willamette River Basin. This is the third annual trip and in the past two years, more than 250 people have participated.

Participants camp on private land along the river, in county parks, and the wonderful Oregon State Park of Willamette Mission. Paddle Oregon provides a great opportunity to learn

about the river and its wildlife, the Willamette's history, and allows participants to see the many parks and greenways along its route.

"We get people on the Willamette River to experience it,

and to learn about it over five days. It is a fantastic opportunity for people interested in the river, and in paddling canoes

and kayaks, to get out there," said Travis Williams, executive director of Willamette Riverkeeper.

Paddle Oregon is one of the only trips of its kind in the country. Paddlers need experience on moving water. Paddle Oregon has an emphasis on river education and experience. The cost for this year's adventure is \$425.

The trip is limited to the first 150 people, so early registration is encouraged to ensure a spot. For a registration packet, go to [www.paddleoregon.org](http://www.paddleoregon.org) or call 503-223-6418.

### Join River City Track Club

Become part of the Portland area's best youth track and field and cross-country organization. The RCTC was voted USATF-Oregon best youth club of the year for 2000 and includes the 2001 USATF-Oregon athlete of the year.

We're the Portland area's only youth organization to offer three full seasons for your athlete to enjoy:

Outdoor Track and Field (March – July)    Indoor Track and Field (December – February)  
Cross-Country (August – November)

Athletes age 7-18 and of all abilities are welcome. Limited slots are available so inquire now for the spring track and field season. For additional info, call 503-735-0290 or e-mail [rctcpdx@aol.com](mailto:rctcpdx@aol.com). Volunteer coaches also are needed.

#### Featured Coaches

##### Distance

Andy Wedam – 1<sup>st</sup> Place,  
2002 Capital City Marathon

##### Middle Distance

Dave Clingan – Masters Ranking  
10<sup>th</sup> in world @ 800M

##### Sprints

Robert Curry – National AAU Sprint  
Champion, 3X 4A high school 100M,  
200M champion

##### Throws

Julie Stevens – coached 2002 Track  
City International shot put champion