

## SMILE Program Draws Families to SVS

by Laurel Johnson

The dark and rainy mood settling into Siletz on this November evening was brightened with a SMILE.

An impressive turnout of students, parents, teachers, and citizens of Siletz and surrounding communities gathered at Siletz Valley School to participate in Family Math and Science Night, an informational event of fun and games sponsored by the SMILE program.

SMILE—Science and Math Investigative Learning Experiences—is operated through Oregon State University (OSU) with the mission of helping elementary and secondary school students acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for higher education.

The program targets students who are disadvantaged educationally by low socioeconomic status, low household income level, linguistic or cultural backgrounds different from those which predominate Oregon's schools, or are from groups whose high school graduation rates are lower than the state average.

The program's goal is to increase the number of these students who graduate from high school qualified to enroll in college and pursue careers related to science, math, health professions, engineering, or education.

Many SMILE communities exist around the state, including Cave Junction, Chiloquin, Dayton, Forest Grove, Madras, Nyssa, Ontario, Pendleton, Siletz/Toledo (Toledo High School has a club), Sisters, Warm Springs, Willamina, and Woodburn.

SMILE was established in 1988 and Siletz School has been involved from the beginning. Since then, different teachers have led the elementary, middle, and high school clubs, which meet after or before school once a week.

A snack is provided and students participate in hands-on activities that surround a theme on which they have been focusing.

In elementary schools, for example, they have been learning about birds so they feed, identify, and count backyard birds around the school, play games that simulate migration, and go on a bird-watching field trip to Finley Wildlife Refuge.

At the November event, various groups—including SMILE of Siletz and Toledo schools, Title I Program, Finley Wildlife Refuge, and representatives from OSU—offered a variety of hands-on educational activities for those who braved the wet weather to attend.

For attendees with additional amounts of bravery, SVS students hosted an "encounter" of live insects, including giant beetles, walking sticks, and praying mantis.

Another participant-friendly exhibit gave attendees the opportunity

to engage in the engineering feat of building bridges with spaghetti noodles. Informational displays ranged from identifying the presence of owls within the natural environment to college readiness programs for students and parents. Raffles and refreshments also were available.

As part of its overall goal, SMILE provides funding for the supplies needed for meetings and projects as well as a field trip fund and a stipend for teachers. Teachers participate in three annual workshops where they learn all kinds of new material, covering all subjects, to use in SMILE club meetings and in their regular classrooms.

During the year, SMILE members take part in special annual events. There are middle school and high school challenges where all students get to stay on campus, learn about the college, and participate in some kind of engineering challenge. Elementary students go to the Outdoor Science Adventure camp for 3½ days in the spring.

All of these programs are provided free to the students. SMILE receives its funding as follows: 35 percent from federal sources; 35 percent from state sources; and the remaining 30 percent from private donors.

For more information, contact Siletz Valley School at 541-444-1100; the director of the SMILE program, Eda Davis-Butts, at 541-737-2388; or visit <http://smile.oregonstate.edu>.

## Aquarium Sees a Rare Hatch

NEWPORT, Ore. — A cluster of wolf-eel eggs have hatched at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, the offspring of a pair of adults that live in the Coastal Waters gallery.

The hatch, a first for wolf-eels at the aquarium, is a rare event because timing is extremely tricky when it comes to pulling wolf-eel eggs from the parents, who guard and care for the eggs constantly.

"There is a small window of opportunity," said aquarist and marine biologist Evonne Mochon Collura, who took over responsibility for the Coastal Waters gallery this year. "You need to let the parents care for the eggs to a certain point, but if you wait too long, the emerging larvae disappear due to predation."

Mochon Collura is becoming known as the "aquarium midwife" for her ability to anticipate and recognize subtle changes in animal behavior that indicate reproduction is about to occur.

"In previous years, we missed the hatch. Wolf-eel eggs normally hatch between week 13 and 16. One egg mass was consumed, and another hatched earlier than expected. Because we could never perfectly mimic the

## Major York Presents Guide On Flag as Thank You for Support



Major Kim York and General Manager Jim Kikumoto

Major Kim York of the Oregon Army National Guard, 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade Task Force Phoenix 5 stationed in Afghanistan, presented Chinook Winds Casino Resort General Manager Jim Kikumoto with a Guide On Flag on Jan. 13.

"This (Guide On) flies to represent who we are and where we are. All the soldiers in the unit signed it and the

Afghani women sewed it. Embroidered on the Guide On flag are tiny flags representing the countries working together in a joint effort with the task force to train the Afghan troops," said Major York.

Members of the Chinook Winds marketing staff have maintained contact with the 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade in Afghanistan for the past two years, both while they have been serving overseas and during leave time in Oregon. Earlier this year, Chinook Winds shipped boxes of items to the 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade at the request of Major York to use as prizes in competitions developed as morale builders for the troops.

"What Chinook Winds sent us brought smiles to the soldiers' faces and one soldier's smile is everything," said Major York.

The 41<sup>st</sup> Brigade Task Force Phoenix 5 is carrying out the philosophy of "Operation Enduring Freedom" in Afghanistan by training the Afghan troops and working to boost the morale of the U.S. troops there.

"We started a Texas Hold 'em tournament with the cards and chips you (Chinook Winds) sent over and now have a tournament every Saturday in the mess hall where we eat. It's been a small way to take the soldiers' minds off the war just long enough to make them smile," said Major York.

"The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon and Chinook Winds Casino Resort are proud to be able to add some degree of comfort to our men and women in combat," said Kikumoto. "We will continue to do what we can to remind our troops that the folks back home haven't forgotten them."