

Energy Assistance Available

Our Siletz Tribal LIEAP Program (Energy Assistance) will take applications starting Oct. 1 for **elders and disabled** Tribal members. For an appointment, contact Ardella Parr at the Siletz Tribal Housing Department, 541-444-8317, or if you live elsewhere within the 11-county service area, contact the Siletz Tribal area offices for an appointment with the worker in that particular office.

General Council Meeting

Nov. 1, 2008

Siletz Tribal Community Center
Siletz, Oregon
Agenda

- 1 p.m. Call to Order
- Invocation
- Flag Salute
- Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Programs:
 - EPR Budget
 - Tribal Council Committee Reports
 - Tribal Members' Concerns
 - Candidates' Declarations
 - Chairman's Report
 - Announcements
- Adjourn



Hatchery Sees Steady String of Improvements

With funding from the Siletz Tribe's EPR budget and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Lhuuke Illahee Fish Hatchery has seen a steady set of improvements in the last two years.

Last year, the hatchery received money from the BIA and EPR budget to pour a concrete slab inside the green barn and a patio next the barn, tear down two old buildings and build a new roof over the outdoor tank deck.

This year, \$10,000 from the BIA helped pour an additional new slab. Any new money received next year will help put a structure on that slab.

The current EPR budget includes \$15,750 for the hatchery, which will build a fixed toilet, an alarm system for the gates and door, a new barn door, rock for the driveway and tractor work.

Much of the tractor work completed so far has been done by Tribal elder Pete Downey, who has contributed many volunteer hours to the hatchery in addition to the work he provides through the Elders WEX Program. He also donates his own equipment to get the work done – mowers, weed eaters, and his truck and gas.

"Pete has worked under the elder program these past two years and has done a great job for us," said Stan van de Wetering, Aquatic Program leader in the Tribal Natural Resources Department. "Without Pete and Frank (Simmons), the hatchery would not have its nice park-like appearance, but rather it would be an overgrown weed patch."

Pete Downey helps level a piece of ground at the Lhuuke Illahee Fish Hatchery in September.
(photos by Diane Rodriguez)

Drinking Age Debate Ignores the Facts

by DeAnna Pearl, A&D Prevention Specialist

Recently, the issue of lowering the drinking age has received significant media attention. A group called Choose Responsibility has enlisted more than 100 university and college presidents to sign on in support of a debate on the merits of the 21-year-old drinking age.

For thousands of public health professionals, researchers and community and youth advocates, this announcement, dubbed the Amethyst Initiative, is troubling. Many of the arguments seem quite rational. If one can fight for his country, why not be able to drink a beer? If we could make drinking alcohol less of a "rite of passage," maybe kids would drink less. These arguments, however, ignore the complex issues surrounding alcohol abuse and addiction.

National organizations like MADD and Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) are mobilizing to provide the facts surrounding the 21 drinking age laws. Locally, this debate provides the CEDARR (Community Efforts Demonstrating the Ability to Rebuild and Restore) Coalition, which meets in Siletz, Ore., with a golden opportunity for education.

Here's the Truth

Lowering the drinking age would have detrimental consequences for youth and communities throughout the country.

Without a doubt, underage drinking, particularly on college campuses, is pervasive and has major repercussions. While lowering the drinking age will remove the immediate enforcement issue on college campuses and shift this responsibility to society at large, it will not alleviate the major costs and consequences associated with alcohol abuse.

Delaying the onset of first use of alcohol is a critical public health strategy. Science confirms that the adolescent brain is not fully developed until the early- to mid-20s. In fact, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, even a "single, moderate dose of alcohol can disrupt learning more powerfully in people in their early twenties, compared to those in their late twenties."

The effects of repeated alcohol consumption during adolescence may also be long-lasting. Youth who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence as an adult than those who wait until age 21.

Studies also illustrate that the decline in the use of any drug, including alcohol, is directly related to its perception of harm or risk by the user. Lowering the drinking age sends the wrong message to America's youth and

will further normalize behavior that clearly has the potential to be both dangerous and addictive.

Here's the good news: Fewer young people are drinking. In fact, in 1984 when the drinking age was 18, only 8 percent of high school seniors had **never** used alcohol in their lifetime. Over time, that percent of seniors has risen to 28 percent, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse's 2007 Monitoring the Future survey.

Comprehensive community-wide strategies are working. Coalitions are reducing underage drinking by addressing the access and availability of alcohol, changing community norms, supporting heightened enforcement, developing social marketing campaigns and building school-community partnerships. These prevention efforts have contributed to a 21.7 percent decrease in the number of 12th-grade students reporting lifetime prevalence of alcohol use between 1984 and 2007.

Many university officials are not in support of lowering the drinking age. For one, Donna Shalala, University of Miami president and former secretary of the Health and Human Services Administration, refused and questioned the rationale, citing progress has been made and lowering the drinking age would only transfer the problem to

our nation's high schools. Some college leaders who signed up with Amethyst now are suggesting they were only supporting increased debate, not specific policies to reduce the drinking age.

Advocates in support of the 21 drinking age are not prohibitionists. We know too well, however, that alcohol abuse and addiction endangers lives, fractures families and damages communities. In an effort to strike a reasonable balance between our culture and these realities, community and public health advocates remain strongly in support of keeping the legal age at 21.

The prevention field has made major strides in reducing underage drinking in recent years. The 21 drinking age is part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce traffic fatalities, delay the onset of initial drinking and make communities safer. Now is not the time to retreat; instead, prevention efforts need to be redoubled.

CEDARR meetings are held monthly at the Siletz Community Health Clinic and anyone is welcome to attend. Please contact me at 541-444-8267, 800-600-5599, or adprev@ctsi.nsn.us.

You also can get more information at www.cadca.org about this important issue facing our youth today.