



Photo by Diane Rodriguez

Levi Simmons and Jeremy Sweet register for the White Bison training held at Chinoook Winds Casino Resort in December. Helping out with registration are Edwina Flagg, Jennifer Metcalf, LeiLani Cordova, Jenifer Most and Sharmon Cook-Wright. White Bison's focus is wellness or Wellbriety, which means to nurture the whole person, the whole family and the whole community – to move people beyond survival to thriving in a cultural way. The "well" part of Wellbriety means to live the healthy parts of the principles, laws and values of traditional culture.

## Walt's Words of Wit and Wisdom

by Walt Klamath

Well, another year has come and gone. Time is going too fast, I still am in about June, I think, maybe last year. It's said that time flies when one is having fun; didn't realize how much fun I have been having.

I go to prison once a month. By golly, seems like I just get back and they call again. I have been going into the prison system now for a number of years.

I have met a lot of people and have seen a few after release. I don't know how many do well afterward, but I personally know 13. If there are that many, I know then there are a lot more.

I have not seen as many Tribal members as I would like; for some reason I don't get to see them. I don't know if they are in the institution or another. Lately, I have been going into the Santiam; that is a minimal security, get those from OSP, Milk Creek and Santiam.

Sometimes I get up to 42 for the sweat ceremony. I see many from Grand Ronde Hoopa, Kurok, Klamath people. Some are from local areas like Summit.

I have not gone to OSCI for a long time; Two Rivers I went to when I was hunting, Ukia and Snake River also. I don't know who else goes to the prisons, but there are not enough of us doing this type of work.

Many are getting up in years so hopefully some young bucks will step forward and pick up the feather. It's true we cannot change anybody, but we can kind of set a direction and nudge a little bit. But the full responsibility is on their shoulders.

Many of them have never had a taste of Native ceremony or belief till they became incarcerated. Why? I don't know, maybe it's not advertised, maybe fear, maybe don't have time or maybe not enough is being done in the Indian community. Like so many other things, a lot of questions and few answers.

I believe that we all need to get behind our people and teach. Really, it makes little difference how it is approached; in my case, it's the sweat lodge. However, that is not the only avenue. Like other self-help activities, it's a kick-start. One does not have to be tied down to "this is the only way." There are many ways.

Sometimes I go on Saturday and turn around and go on Sunday, then at my place on Monday. Kind of busy at times. It hasn't always been that way, but it's starting to happen more often.

I think I will patent a weight-loss thing, though. I usually lose two pounds a sweat. Of course, that is mostly water I guess, but it's a loss of weight for a day or two anyway.

At my place, we have sweats every Monday night at 5 – rain, snow, hail or what have you. Holidays? Well, our lodge is dedicated to recovery and alcohol and drugs do not take a holiday. In fact, holidays are days to double up so if necessary, we will double up on the stones and water.

Our lodge is open to all peoples – red, yellow, white and black. Spirituality belongs to any who seek it, I believe anyway. We have had those who recover in the lodge and we have had those who die because they could not remain clean and sober. It's not a religious ceremony, however, it is spiritual.

## Notes from Healthy Family Healthy Child Project

The good news is that illegal drug use by our kids is down. The bad news is that the abuse of prescribed drugs is up and parents and grandparents are the source of these drugs.

Today, teen-agers are not using as much cocaine, crack, LSD and ecstasy as the teen-agers of the 1960s. Kids have found other ways and means to get high; painkillers and other prescription drugs are being abused at record levels. This upcoming generation of teens has been given the name "Generation Rx."

Teens often get caught raiding their parents' or grandparents' medicine cabinets in order to get high. For the first time, national studies show that today's teens are more likely to have abused a prescription painkiller than any illicit drug.

Teen-agers can get involved with prescription drugs in various ways. The experimental stage can be very dangerous because kids often don't see the link between their actions today the consequences of their actions tomorrow.

Most teens have a tendency to feel indestructible and immune to the problems that others experience. Some teens will experiment and stop, while others may continue to use occasionally without any significant problem. Then there are those who develop a dependency; these are the ones who need immediate intervention and help learning to make better decisions.

It's impossible to predict which teens will experiment and stop and which ones will develop serious problems. Know what your teen is doing and who they are doing it with. The following are some warning signs of teen-agers at risk for developing serious prescription drug dependency:

- A family history of substance or alcohol abuse
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Feel like they don't fit in and are not popular with the mainstream
- Frequently feel sluggish and have difficulty sleeping
- Aggressive and rebellious attitude toward authority figures

Prescription drug abuse is increasing; the main reason is they are so easily accessible. If your child has one or more of the above behaviors, seek help from a professional.

Some things you can share with your teen about prescription medications include:

- Pharmaceuticals taken without a prescription or a doctor's supervision can be just as dangerous as taking illicit drugs or alcohol.
- Abusing painkillers is like abusing heroin because their ingredients are similar (both are opiates).
- Prescription medications are powerful substances. Medications help sick people and are administered by a doctor. When prescription medication is not used for sickness and not administered by a professional, it becomes a controlled substance and the impact on the person can be deadly.
- Many pills look the same and teen-agers can get them mixed up. This can cause different reactions in different people because of the body's chemistry. It's extremely dangerous to take pills that are unknown.
- Mixing drugs with other substances is very dangerous. Some people have allergic reactions to different chemicals when they are mixed together.

What can you do to help prevent teens or any other person from getting involved with prescription drug abuse? The best thing to do is keep your prescription drugs in a safe place.

Don't put them in the medicine cabinet in your bathroom because that is the first place teen-agers will look. If possible, lock them up in a cabinet or safe box. Talk to your teen and warn them of the dangers of prescription drug abuse.

### References

Generation Rx? Teens abusing prescriptions. MSNBC.com. Report: More youth getting high on painkillers than on illegal drugs, The Associated Press, April 21, 2005. [www.msnbc.msn.com/id/7582787/print/1/displaymode/1098/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/7582787/print/1/displaymode/1098/).

Drugs and Teens Substance Abuse. [www.focusas.com/substanceabuse.html](http://www.focusas.com/substanceabuse.html).

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI). [www.drugfree.org/portal/DrugIssue/Features/Prescription\\_MedicineMisuse](http://www.drugfree.org/portal/DrugIssue/Features/Prescription_MedicineMisuse).

Narcotics Anonymous Toll-Free Help Line – 877-233-4287

For information on Alcoholics Anonymous: [www.aa-oregon.org/](http://www.aa-oregon.org/)

### Siletz Tribal A&D Programs

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