



Brandy Logan and Tesha Socha were two of many vendors who attended the gathering.



Photos by Diane Rodriguez

Above: Ed Ben participates in the Color Guard at the opening Grand Entry, along with William DePoe Jr., Earl Edmonds, Alan Fish and Dennis Lane.

Left: Singers from several groups join the West Coast Boyz during Grand Entry. The Boyz took first place in the drum competition held later in the day.



March Notes from the Healthy Family Healthy Child Project

Perseverance – You can't truly succeed without perseverance. As many Elders would say, life isn't worth living unless you are forced to defend it now and then. They also say that many things in life can teach us to persevere, like our relatives the buffalo. They have been to the brink of extinction but they are surviving primarily by being who and what they are – quietly and steadfastly.

Do you volunteer? Have you ever felt the desire to impact, in a very positive way, the life of another person? One need not jump on a plane and go to a foreign country to satisfy this urge to help others.

My first experience with volunteering actually came as a result of a visit to a Boy Scout Troop adult leaders meeting, where about 12 adult leaders were discussing a logistical problem that the troop was experiencing.

I was there only to find out what my nephew needed to do to join the troop. I walked into this meeting seeking information and walked out an assistant scout master. Those guys finessed me so smoothly I didn't even know I was being finessed.

As it turned out, it was the beginning of a period of personal growth and enrichment that I must have needed. The memories are good and I use the skills I learned while involved in Scouts to this very day, several decades after the fact.

I was very surprised to read that volunteerism has health benefits for

those who volunteer. I read a report by the Public Health Agency of Canada that says, "Volunteer work improves the well-being of individual volunteers primarily, but not exclusively, by enhancing social support networks." People with social contacts through volunteering have lower premature death rates, less heart disease and fewer health risk factors.

One study indicated that volunteering needs to be shared with a consistent group of people. The writer of this study found a strong relationship between volunteering and longevity, but noted that this relationship holds only when volunteers give at least 40 hours per year to a single cause.

One study I read stated that one of the benefits of volunteering is personal happiness. This study said money, good looks, intelligence and youth did not bring happiness to people, but those who volunteered and did charity work generated more joy than anything except dancing.

Areas with the best reported quality of life also reported the most volunteerism. These people also reported better health, less crime, saw themselves as "very satisfied" with their lives as well as showed that the students in this study also got better grades on standardized tests. These benefits held true regardless of the socio-economic status of the group participating in the study.

A study done by the University of Wisconsin shows that people who actively volunteer have elevated immune function and decreased death rates. The U.S. government website Get Involved lists several

other health benefits that have been documented to be associated with volunteering, such as less heart disease, fewer health risk factors, lower heart rate and blood pressure, increased endorphin production, buffers the impact of stress, boosts the social factors that healthy people have, less insomnia, hastens surgery recovery time and increases physical activity.

Many volunteer opportunities exist within our community, such as the volunteer fire department, Meals on Wheels, reading to kids or seniors and one of my favorites, Bright Horizon Therapeutic Riding Center, which is housed at Walker Farms at 1925 Logsdon Road.

Bright Horizon uses equine therapy to enrich the lives of children and adults with special needs and challenges. Riders come to Bright Horizon from the Tribe, the community at-large as well as from the Willamette Valley. The Tribe has been very generous in its support of Bright Horizon through the Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund.

Bright Horizon is a non-profit organization that pair riders with horses. While riding, the rider develops inner "core" strength that so often is lacking because of their disability. They gain flexibility and self-confidence, as well as socialization skills and the ability to bond with other living things.

Each horse and rider requires a horse leader and often two side walkers to assure the stability and safety of the rider, adult or child. Volunteers are needed to make sure horses are tacked and ready for

a specific rider, to walk with the riders and to muck stalls. You can take on as much of a role as you have time for.

If you feel like contributing, you will be welcomed. If you desire more information, drop by any Friday that sessions are being held from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. If you want more information, please e-mail Kathy Barnes, volunteer coordinator, at kathyebarnes@gmail.com.

Another opportunity for those interested in volunteering can be had with Indian Child Welfare as a foster parent. The need for Native homes for Native children is great and the volunteers are few.

The shortage of qualified or willing homes is serious. The need for Tribal homes is approximately 400 times greater than that of children of non-Native cultures and the shortage is nationwide.

Half of Siletz Tribal children who have been removed from their homes do not reside in the home of a Tribal family, Siletz or otherwise. Historically, Native children have been targeted to be placed in homes of the dominate culture, not in the homes of extended family or other Tribal homes. This situation perpetuates historical trauma and generational grief in our society.

Again, the need is great and the homes are few. Please consider this volunteer option and make an immediate impact on the life of a child.

If you are interested in this possibility or have any questions about the possibility of becoming a foster parent, please call Shawna Henarie at 541-444-8275 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1275.