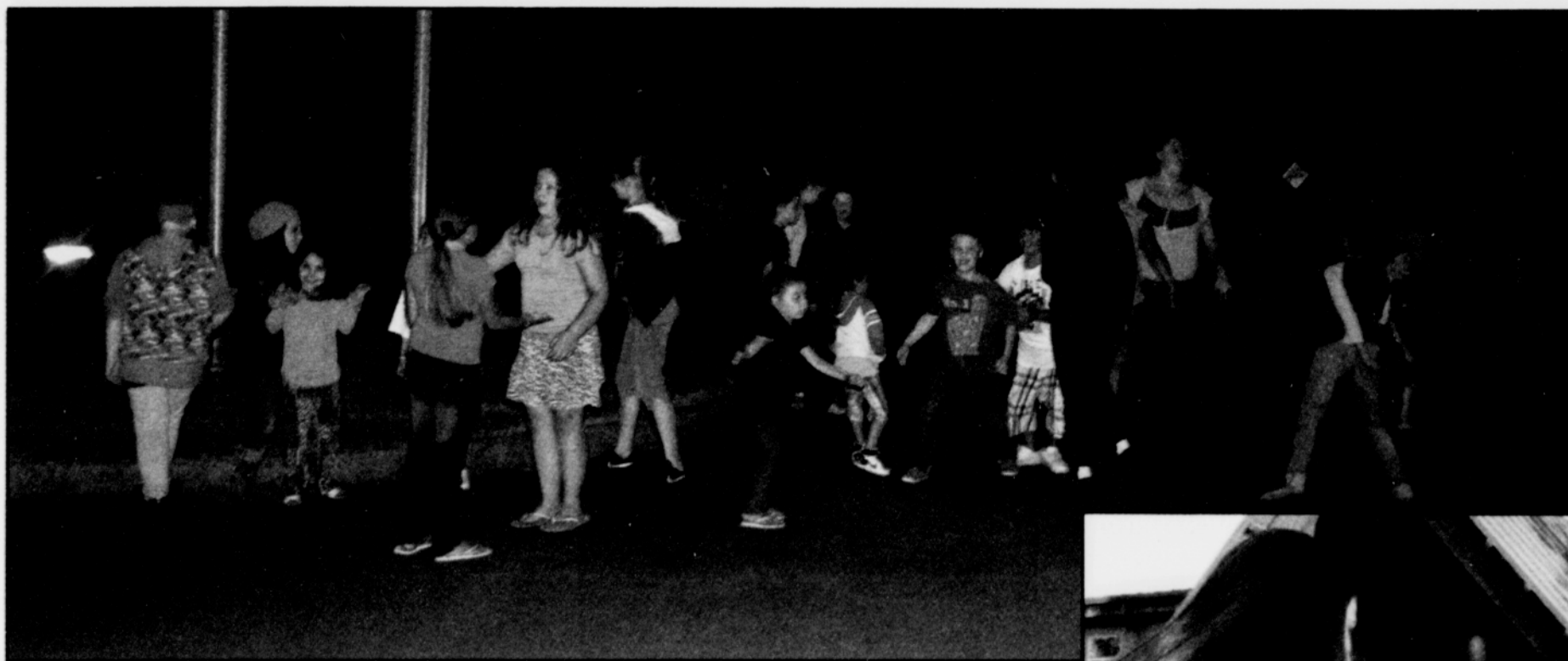




Street Dance July 29, 2011 Siletz, Oregon

Photos by Natasha Kavanaugh

Youth of all ages (left) dance to the music supplied by Brian Timme of Ultrasonic.

Jenifer Metcalf (below, right) talks to Chazlynn Goodell and Britany Robertson as another youth signs in for the event. Metcalf is the Tribal prevention coordinator and a member of the Youth Services Team.



Enter online contest that encourages healthy eating

Teacher Monday: Cash for Classrooms

In an effort to get school children across North America to eat healthier, Del Monte Fresh Produce will hold its second annual Teacher Monday: Cash for Classrooms online contest in October and November.

This contest encourages kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers to incorporate healthy eating and living messages into classroom activities. Teachers can register at fruits.com/home.aspx, submit a short essay on how they will incorporate healthy eating messages into their lesson plans and then encourage all their fans to vote for them online.

Ten winners will be selected each Monday for six consecutive weeks in October and November. Winners are based solely on the number of votes they receive. Winning teachers will receive \$750 in cash to purchase school supplies and \$250 in Del Monte fresh fruit coupons for classroom snacks and to use in fruit educational activities.

Tooth Talk: Cool clear (fluoridated) water, '... all ages and economic strata'

By Mary Ellen Volansky, RDH, MS

Those words in quotation marks are from Dr. David Satcher, former U.S. surgeon general. He is referring to the benefits everyone's teeth can have with water fluoridation, not just those children who get taken to the dentist.

A group calling itself FIN, the Fluoride Information Network, has listed a few values for why its members support water fluoridation in our community water supplies. This article will address some of those values.

FIN Value 1: "It promotes health for all community members, even the disadvantaged and most vulnerable."

The disadvantaged are those who cannot afford dentistry and children whose parents don't take them to the dentist. Maybe these parents don't know the importance of regular dental care or they consider themselves too busy. Disadvantaged also applies to anyone who doesn't live near a dental office, which includes many rural families in this country.

Vulnerable citizens can be children because they don't have the awareness, freedom or money to go to a dentist. Nor do the vulnerable have the money to buy home care supplies.

Other vulnerable citizens are many elderly people. They tend to suffer from recession and root exposure. The roots of our teeth develop cavities more easily than the enamel that covers the crowns of our teeth.

Elders also often are on prescription medications, most of which decrease the amount of saliva. Our saliva is important as it washes the acids and sugars from our mouths. Saliva also buffers (inactivates) the acids so they cannot cause cavities. In other words, vulnerable citizens are most at risk for cavities and tooth pain.

Another group of vulnerable citizens are people of all ages who have a disability. They can be vulnerable to cavities and infection because of physical limitations that make brushing and flossing their teeth difficult or impossible, a lack of transportation to get to the dental clinic, lack of access into a dental office or dental chair (wide operatories with space for wheelchairs to move) or special scheduling for appointments.

Water fluoridation would reduce the rate of cavities for everyone when they just do what they do daily – drink water.

Value 2: Using our local and state tax dollars equitably and in a cost-effective manner. In my research for this article, I saw many references to the cost to fluoridate drinking water and I wondered if any money was saved.

The cost of fluoride in a community's drinking water can be as low as 40 cents per person per year or as high as \$2.70 per person per year for the state of New York. New York (Oregon as well) summarized its position on paying this cost this way: "Every dollar spent on fluoridation on average saves \$38 in avoided dental bills."¹

Where state health plans cover dental care, this is a chunk of money that's available for other health care services or just plain saved taxed dollars.

Our newest dentist, Dr. Douglas Chadwick, worked in private practice before arriving at the Siletz Dental Clinic. A filling in that practice cost \$150. On average, the expected life of a filling is about 12 years, when another filling is then needed – another \$150 or more if inflation over the 12 years is added in.

Value 3: Preventing disease.

One source listed the rate of tooth decay reduction from drinking water fluoridation to be between 40 percent and 70 percent.² Another study on 12-year-old

children listed the reduction in cavities of fluoridated drinking water at 37 percent.³ The Center for Disease Control credits community water fluoridation with reducing tooth decay by 50 percent to 60 percent in the United States since World War II.⁴

How does fluoride make this reduction happen? A tooth becomes de-mineralized during the early stages of a developing cavity. You see this as white lines or spots on teeth, usually near the gum line or around orthodontic brackets once the bracket is removed. When these areas are left unclean, the area will grow to a full-blown cavity (brown spot or hole).

Replacing the lost minerals in a tooth restores the tooth, not the color, and keeping the area clean stops the progress of decay into a brown spot or a hole. Fluoride in drinking water will itself replace lost minerals and make the surface hard again.

Also, fluoride in the mouth from drinking water aids the absorption of calcium into the tooth. The calcium and fluoride strengthen teeth against cavities; the teeth become stronger or harder and more resistant to cavities forming.

Fluoride can help slow down bacteria, which slows the production of acids that cause cavities. Stopping cavity bugs is good. Both actions help prevent cavities.⁵

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states the following: "The proper amount of fluoride from infancy through old age helps prevent and control tooth decay. Community water fluoridation is a widely accepted practice for preventing and controlling tooth decay by adjusting the concentration of fluoride in the public water supply."⁶ CDC goes on to say that infant formula can be made with optimally fluoridated tap water.

CDC adds that an increased chance exists of a child developing "mild dental fluorosis," defined as "white spots that are barely noticeable and difficult for anyone except a dental health care professional to see."

The *Journal of the American Dental Association*, 2009, concluded from study on enamel fluorosis and dental caries that molars with mild fluorosis are more resistant (to cavities) than molars without mild fluorosis. The clinical implications highlight the need for those considering policies regarding reduction in fluoride exposure to take into consideration the caries-preventive benefits associated with mild forms of enamel fluorosis.⁷

In summary, "The evidence supporting the safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness of fluoridation of community water supplies comes from multiple sources covering 50 years of legitimate research published in peer-reviewed journals, including both long-term studies on large populations, recent confirmatory studies and comprehensive literature reviews" (fluorideinfo.org).

FIN goes on to say, "Adding fluoride to drinking water is an important element in promotion of dental health along with education and access to dental care."

If you have questions about any of this, please contact the Siletz Dental Clinic at 541-444-1030 or 800-648-0449; or contact me at maryellenv@ctsi.nsn.us.

1 health.state.ny.us/prevention/dental/fluoridation/cost.htm

2 animated-teeth.com/tooth_decay/t4_tooth_decay_fluoride.htm

3 sciencedirect.com ScienceDirect – Journal of Dentistry, p. 2

4 adha.org/profissues/cdc_fluoride_guidelines.htm

5 sciencedirect.com, ScienceDirect-Journal of Dentistry, p 1-2

6 ced.gov/fluoridation/safety/infant_formula.htm

7 jada.ada.org/content/140/7/855.full