



Youth Conference
B'nai B'rith Camp, Lincoln City, Ore. • Nov. 9-10, 2013

Photos by Diane Rodriguez

Several groups of young people (above) plus Lexi Metcalf, Kaetlin Bayya, Angel DeAnda and Frankie Rilatos (below) take part in indigenous games during the conference. Other activities included cultural sharing, breakout sessions led by the Change Team and the Healthy Traditions project, and a presentation by the Siletz Youth Council.



Courtesy photo

Congratulations!
Tim Pigsley got lucky during the September bow season.

Tooth Talk: The season is upon us to let cranberries help care for our teeth

By Mary Ellen Volansky, EPDH, MS

To begin, allow me to express my appreciation for your patience while I was gone this summer. Many of you had appointments cancelled, more than once, because I was in western New York for my mother's sudden seven-week illness and her passing on July 25.

It was my responsibility to close up her apartment and find a home for Lucy, her cat. In choosing which special possessions of hers I wanted, I seemed to end up wanting everything – the vase and flowers or the dish where she placed her favorite candy, the watch and/or the necklace, the afghan she crocheted and/or the needlepoint she worked and framed.

As the number of boxes grew, I began to realize I was trying to collect her into these boxes, an attempt to preserve her and bring her with me back to Oregon.

Thank you to all who have voiced your condolences for Mom's passing and my family's loss. I'll admit I knew I would miss her, but the intensity of this loss has been a surprise to me. Thank you all.

Well, we are in the midst of the season of being busy with family and foods. As enjoyable as all these foods and activities are, they may provide opportunities to miss brushing and flossing. And when we miss completing our home care routine, we increase the risk of developing cavities.

Oh, you say you never miss? Good. For those of us who miss and for those who don't, here are some holiday hints that could enhance your oral health experience now, during the holidays, and always.

Cranberries, an all-time favorite side dish, began its nationwide burst onto our taste buds in the '50s. As many of you know, or can guess, cranberries first were eaten as a food by North American Indians. Did you know that cranberries, besides making a great taste sensation, can be helpful in reducing the risk of tooth decay?

Robert Kentta told me that cranberries also are called "bog huckleberries." He suggested that in Athabascan, cranberries might be call "Lhtuu-me' or Tuu-me' Dee-chi" or words for "marsh+huckleberry."

Algonquian people called them Sassamanash,¹ which was used for pemmican, wound medicine and dye.² The Thompson and Okanagon Indians³ used cranberries as a food too. Cranberries are high in vitamin C, potassium and antioxidants.

It is when bacteria have set up communities on our teeth that we call those communities plaque. Only when bacteria are in these communities on our teeth can the bacteria poop/excrete acids that cause cavities. Lhtuu-me' contains natural enzymes that prevent bacteria from form-

ing on our teeth. Sounds great, bring on the cranberries.

Of course, there is a hitch. Have you ever eaten plain cranberries? Have you ever eaten a cranberry off the bush? Sour and bitter without, you guessed it, sugar. Lots of sugar, about a teaspoon per ounce is found in cranberry juice cocktail.⁴

Many dentists, including Hyun "Michel" Koo, DDS, Ph.D., at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York state, with a grant from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, are working on finding ways for us to prevent cavities more easily than we can now.⁵

Dr. Koo is working to find the exact substance in Lhtuu-me' that keeps plaque from growing on our teeth. Once found, this substance might be made into a toothpaste or mouthwash to prevent cavities.

Most of the foods surrounding the coming winter holidays are good for our health: grains, meats, dairy, and veggies and fruit. We all need the nutrients contained in these foods each day. Proteins, vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants, etc. are in those foods, nutrients that build our bodies toward our overall good health.

As with cranberries, it's what is added to them that causes us problems – salt, sugar or fats, nitrates, sulfates or maybe cooking them to the point of destroying the nutrients inside. Generally, this com-

bination of good and bad foods won't cause us problems if they are eaten as a holiday's special meal, eaten once in a while.

Those additions cause us problems when we consume these foods throughout the day, every day. And they cause us problems when we don't take the other steps necessary to maintain our health each day – exercise, brush and floss, drink water, rest, etc.

Try reading labels. Look for sugar to not be the first item in the ingredients list (certainly not the first and second ingredient, as in Hostess Snowballs).

Also in anticipation of this holiday season, check this out. It takes 17 muscles to smile and 43 to frown,⁶ so take the easy way out and smile all the time.

You have my wishes for experiencing many reasons to smile, including enjoying your favorite holiday(s), mouthwatering foods and spending time with family and friends. May peace be with you.

1 wikipedia.org/wiki/cranberry

2 wikipedia.org/wiki/cranberry

3 Perry, F. 1952 *Ethno-Botany of the Indians in the Interior of British Columbia*. Museum and Art Notes 2(2):36-43. (p.38)

4 wikipedia.org/wiki/cranberry, page 1

5 urmc.rochester.edu/news/story/index.cfm?id=3048

6 2009 American Dental Association, *Flossy's Big Book of Dental Trivia*