

UMATILLA

Prison's first pow wow digs into the roots

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

"I know for me, it's one of my Zens. It takes me away from inside these walls."

— Paul Stover, TRCI inmate and CTUIR member

People sang, danced and drummed Saturday in Umatilla, on the inside of the high prison fence.

Two Rivers Correctional Institution held its first powwow, attended by 63 inmates, more than 50 guests and 27 representatives from American Indian tribes and organizations. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and others provided salmon, huckleberries and traditional foods for the event. Prison

administrators even directed staff overseeing the powwow to forgo uniforms for a more casual approach, including khakis, polos and shorts.

Naomi Strawser arrived in tribal regalia representing Lakota Oyate Ki, an American Indian culture club that originated with inmates at Oregon State Penitentiary, Salem. She said she advocates for alternative forms

of justice and the need for Indian inmates to have a relationship with their culture. Without that, she said, they don't know who they are. Building those bonds, though, connects them to a greater community.

"I think it helps give heart and hope," she said. "This gives people a road back home."

Inmate Paul Stover echoed that notion. He is a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and handled most of the smudging, or cleansing ceremony, for participants and guests.

"I know for me, it's one of my Zens," he said, "it takes me away from inside these walls."

TRCI already has a sweat lodge and a beadworking program, he said.

Two Rivers chaplain Jaime Cardona said planning the powwow took almost a year and served as an incentive for inmates to behave and work toward a goal. Many of the men taking part in the ceremony invited family, Cardona said, and they did not want to get in trouble and then miss out on their culture



Staff photo by Phil Wright

Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Umatilla, held its first pow wow Saturday, complete with donated traditional American Indian foods, drumming and a few ceremonial dancers. TRCI had 41 American Indian inmates in July, according to state prison demographics, but other inmates also participate in Indian traditions and ceremonies.



Staff photo by Phil Wright

Inmate Paul Stover waves sage smoke over fellow inmates during a smudging ceremony Saturday in preparation of the first pow wow at Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Umatilla. Stover said engaging in such cultural practices reduces criminal thinking and behaviors.

and their loved ones.

Patricia Jordan is executive director of Red Lodge Transitional Services, a nonprofit that helps American Indians leaving prisons make better lives for themselves. Two Rivers officials and inmates said Jordan was instrumental in making the powwow a reality. She has been a religious services volunteer with the Oregon Department of Corrections

for 16 years and help prisons start American Indian programs.

"We believe that culture is best practice," she said. Jordan said that helps Indian inmates find an identity and a path out of crime and addiction.

She and fellow Red Lodge volunteers Mable Jackson and Sarah Franks also made fry bread Saturday for the festivities. And Sunday

they headed to Ontario for a powwow at Snake River Correctional Institution.

Franks recalled a speaker at another prison powwow who encouraged inmates to join the dance circle. He told the crowd that not joining the circle is what landed them in prison in the first place.

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Tribes set to harvest largest fishery of year

East Oregonian

The largest tribal fishery of the year is underway on the Columbia River.

Anglers from the Umatilla, Nez Perce, Warm Springs and Yakama tribes have started harvesting fall salmon, with an estimated 778,000 chinook expected to migrate past Bonneville Dam. Another 200,000 coho, 149,000 summer steelhead and 19,700 natural-origin Snake River chinook are predicted upriver.

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission says the resurgence of the fall run in recent years is a direct result of tribal restoration projects that have steadily increased the number of fish returning to the Columbia River system. Last year's fall chinook returns broke records in the Columbia, with a whopping 1.3 million total fish.

"The fall harvest represents many things to tribal fishers along the Columbia River," said CRITFC Chairman Patrick Luke. "The fall fishery is the economic backbone for

our fishing communities, is the continuation of knowledge and tradition that has been passed down through the generations and represents decades of hard work and dedication to rebuilding salmon runs."

Tribal fishermen could catch more than 200,000 of the fish during this year's season, representing approximately 3.4 million pounds of salmon. Most of the commercial harvest will be sold to wholesale fish dealers, which ends up in stores and restaurants throughout the Pacific Northwest, though individuals can also buy salmon and steelhead directly from tribal fishermen at certain locations along the river — including Marine Park in Cascade Locks; North Bonneville, one mile east of Bonneville Dam on the Washington shore; Koberg, just east of Hood River; and Celilo Village.

For up-to-date information on sales locations, availability and purchasing tips, call the CRITFC salmon marketing program at 1-888-289-1855 or visit www.critfc.org/harvest.



Photo contributed by Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Jordan Wheeler, right, and Jordyn Brignam harvest fall chinook from nets along the Columbia River.

Life boat available to those treading murky Medicare waters

By ALEXA LOUGEE
East Oregonian

"I never knew I wanted to turn 65 so fast."

— Kristine Lindner, retired state employee

Medicare is such a complicated issue the state of Oregon has put out an 87-page guide to Medicare insurance plans.

The federal government, through grants from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, provides free help in navigating Medicare's sometimes murky waters.

The grants fund the Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance program, which recently held a series of "Medicare 101" meetings in Eastern Oregon. Certified volunteer counselors with SHIBA explained the services they provide, walked attendees through the different Medicare insurance plans, answered questions, offered ideas for saving money and provided overall support.

SHIBA volunteers can help enrollees select a prescription drug plan, find out if they are receiving all possible benefits, compare supplemental health insurance policies, evaluate long-term care need, and file an appeal or complaint.

These services are available at no cost to people with Medicare, their family members, caregivers and advocates.

Last Thursday morning in the Stanfield Library, two community members, both on the verge of turning 65, met with SHIBA representatives. Tom Humphreys and Kristine Lindner sat with volunteers for two hours while they walked through their individual needs.

Humphreys is a retired state employee and is navigating what Medicare and

PERS mean to each other. Lindner is a widow, determining what benefits she is eligible for. After learning her premiums would decrease significantly once she is on Medicare she said, "I never knew I wanted to turn 65 so fast."

Donna Delikat, a SHIBA field officer, warned of Medicare scams on TV, cautioning people not to call those phone numbers because the company just sells personal information to other companies.

Cynthia Hylton is also a SHIBA field officer and presented at the Eastern Oregon meetings. She said there is \$60-90 billion in Medicare fraud every year.

Open enrollment for Medicare begins Oct. 15 and runs through December.

Umatilla County has SHIBA volunteers at Good Shepherd Medical Center. They can be reached at 541-667-3507.

BRIEFLY

Sipe to speak at school board convention

UMATILLA — Joining other high-profile educational speakers from across the country, Umatilla School District Superintendent Heidi Sipe will deliver one of the keynote speeches at the Oregon School Board Association convention in Portland Nov. 13.

According to the association, Sipe's interactive presentation will focus on how school boards help develop a district's vision and translate goals into reality.

Umatilla's superintendent since 2007, Sipe won the 2016 Oregon Superintendent of the Year award from

the Oregon Association of School Executives and the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators.

"What sets Heidi apart is her keen ability to think strategically, guided by her integrity," the website states. "She is a collaborative leader, known throughout Oregon for being a good listener and a bold educator."

Discussion focuses on climate change

ECHO — A discussion about climate change and what individuals can do to reverse its global ramifications is planned in Echo.

After sitting on the fence about global warming, Peter Haug began researching the topic and taking online courses. A

retired journalist, systems ecologist and ESL teacher in China, Haug has become a climate change educator. He will speak Thursday, Sept. 1 from 6-7:30 p.m. at Echo City Hall, 20 Bonanza St. The presentation is free.

For more information, call Joe Ramos at 509-366-3980.

Helix cattleman headed to Angus conference

HELIX — Ryan Raymond, of Raymond & Son Inc., has been elected as a delegate to the 133rd

annual American Angus Association Convention Nov. 5-7 in Indianapolis.

The American Angus Association, based in Saint Joseph, Missouri, is the nation's largest beef breed organization, serving nearly 25,000 members across the United States, Canada and several other countries. Raymond is one of 328 Angus breeders who have been elected by fellow members in their state to serve as a representative at the annual meeting.

For more information about Angus cattle and the 2016 convention, visit www.angus.org.