



# EAST OREGONIAN

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## Area high schools get glimpse of tribal ways Educating one another

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Dozens of area high school students got a peek at life from the view of local American Indian tribes in an effort to bridge cultural divides.

They came Wednesday morning from high schools in Pendleton, Echo, Pine Eagle, Joseph and Imbler and joined their fellow students from Nixyaawii Community School at Tamástslikt Cultural Institute on the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton. Aaron Noisey, for-

merly with Nixyaawii but now a teacher for Echo, said planning for the program began in April in the wake of some racial incidents at school sporting events.

Rather than issue condemnations for bad behavior, he said, Nixyaawii and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation sought a different route.

"One of my things is," he said, "if I don't know, don't belittle me, educate me."

Noisey delivered that message to the students as well:



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

**Chuck Sams, communications director for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, speaks to local high school athletes Wednesday about tribal history and beliefs.**

"Really, what we're trying to do here is educate one another," he told them.

Tamástslikt interpretor John Bevis led students on a tour of the museum. He presented the history of the Natitayt, the people, from their earliest days on the Columbia Plateau through the coming of the European settlers and the subsequent disruption of tribal life and deaths of tribal peoples. He called the Oregon Trail "the longest cemetery in America."

That history affects every tribal mem-

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Staff photo by Kathy Aney

**Chuck Sams, communications director for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, speaks at the tribal longhouse on the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton.**

## Morrow County looks at housing options as jobs increase

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

Morrow County is providing a growing number of jobs in the region, but at the end of the workday, the majority of those people go back to their homes somewhere else.

That may be slowly starting to change.

Morrow County Planning Director Carla McLane said the county is looking seriously at how to house the many people who work

in the county but don't live there.

"The commute pattern is out of sync with the housing pattern," she said. "As the port has grown, we haven't seen the residential part of Morrow County keep pace with that."

In the last two months, the Morrow County Planning Commission has approved permits for new housing and rental units in the area, and will launch a committee to study the developable land in the county next month.

At a meeting on Monday, the commission approved a request for the Ruggs Ranch, near Heppner, to use the facility as a guest lodge all year, and approved a land partition for a non-farm dwelling unit, also near Heppner.

In July, the commission approved a permit for the Gala Springs Subdivision, comprised of 14 two-acre lots west of Boardman that will be used for residential development.

McLane said when that parcel was up for

approval at last month's planning commission meeting, some people were concerned about the impact it would have on other residents in the area.

"There were a number of people testifying with concerns about the water table, 14 new septic systems," she said, adding that the area is already designated for high nitrates. "They don't want to say no to

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## Annual Bigfoot conference draws local's interest



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

**Bigfoot believer Corissa Howland of Milton-Freewater poses with souvenirs she brought back from last year's International Bigfoot Conference and Film Festival.**

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Bigfoot remains big business.

The International Bigfoot Conference and Film Festival is in its third year and runs Friday through Sunday at the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick. The event attracts hundreds, from die-hard Bigfoot believers and enthusiasts to the curious to skeptics.

Corissa Howland of Milton-Freewater is among the believers and will trek back and forth from Oregon all three days of the conference with her aunt from Pendleton.

Science didn't verify the existence of the mountain gorilla until 1902, Howland said, and stories about Bigfoot stretch back into the long history of American Indians. She also finds

modern reports of the hairy hominid compelling.

"With the variety of sightings for the most part being consistent," Howland said, "it stands to reason there very well may be something out there."

Howland has not had an encounter with the legendary creature, but she recalled her father told of spotting "something" from a distance that looked large and upright. She said when he checked the tree the figure had been standing near, the height of the branch indicated it was about 8 feet tall.

She said if she saw a Bigfoot from some distance away, she would try to snap a clear photo. But she might have a different reaction in a closer encounter.

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