

# EDUCATING: ‘American Indian is a political subset of the U.S. population’

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ber, he told them, who each day have to balance their lives as citizens of the United States of America and members of American Indian tribes.

Bevis said during a brief break that some of the students will take something away from the program and others not so much. But maybe sometime when they hear something about American Indians, this day will make them think.

“But at least they hear it,” he said.

Students also practiced with an atlatl, a spear-throwing tool tribal people once used to bring down game. Tamástslíkt collection curator Randall Melton guided them in the use of the device, which uses leverage to launch the spear at a greater velocity, just as the sport jai alai uses the hand-held “cesta” to throw balls at more than 100 mph.

The goal Wednesday was to stick spears into a couple of hay stacks, which proved easier said than done. Melton asked students to imagine using the atlatl to bring down live, moving game. The upshot, he said,

was tribal people had the time to put in the practice to become proficient.

Following a hot dog lunch, the students heard from Chuck Sams, communications director for the tribes, who spoke on the political history of American Indians. “Native American,” he said, is an ethnic group, but “American Indian” is in the United States Constitution.

“American Indian is a political subset of the U.S. population,” Sams told them, and that comes with consequences, such as laws that apply to American Indians but not to the rest of the population.

For example, he said, Oregon had a law requiring American Indians traveling through Salem to call the Capitol and let people know they were in town. Sams said he did that in the 1990s and when the staff finally asked why, he said because it was the law. That and similar laws allowed the government to track American Indians, Sams said. Oregon finally dropped the law in the early 2000s.

He also explained how tribal values inform their way of life. Western values, he said, hold that a person



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

**High school athletes, from teams that play Nixyaawii, get some insight on tribal history and beliefs from CTUIR Communications Director Chuck Sams on Wednesday at the longhouse.**

has unlimited wants and limited resources, while tribal values hold a person has limited wants and unlimited resources. That means wanting good air, clean water, abundant food

and timber.

“This mindset is what has allowed us to survive and thrive on this land for thousands of years,” Sams said.

Kelly Foster is the asso-

ciate director of the Oregon School Activities Association and also manages the state’s Class 1A high school basketball tournament in Baker City. She said Noisey told her about the cultural

experiment and it piqued her interest.

“This was kind of the perfect spot to start this,” she said.

Educational opportunities for students to broaden their minds are good, she said, and this program could serve as a model for other schools, including in Washington, where Hermiston now competes.

Anika McDonald is a sophomore at Imbler High School and plays basketball, volleyball and golf. She had little knowledge of the tribal experience, she said, so the day was a boon to her education. She also said some of the little details of life on the reservation were interesting.

“I never knew they had sweat houses in their back yards,” she said.

McDonald said seeing the tribe’s way of living revealed differences but also plenty of similarities to build relationships on.

Noisey said that was the aim Wednesday, and the program could continue, involving other schools and communities.

Contact Phil Wright at [pwright@eastoregonian.com](mailto:pwright@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0833.

“I never knew they had sweat houses in their back yards”

— Anika McDonald, sophomore at Imbler High School

# HOUSING: ‘The demographic of south county — it’s an aging population’

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development, but they want to be conscientious of how to balance it.”

She said the planning commission acknowledged those were concerns that may need to be addressed down the road, but seven of the nine commissioners voted in favor of the development.

McLane said there has been some growth in the northern part of the county,

both in and out of city limits.

“I’ve been here 17 years and have probably seen half a dozen subdivisions approved and built,” she said.

But she added that many of those subdivisions are reaching full capacity now.

“I think (Gala Springs) will begin to meet this next set of demands,” she said.

She said they have not yet found a developer for the land, and that it’s

unlikely there will be any construction on the site until spring.

A 120-unit apartment complex being built in Boardman, McLane said, may soon pave the way for more housing within city limits.

“Depending on how quickly that fills up, they have another phase planned, another 120 units,” she said.

McLane said as the north end of the county has attracted business, the south

end has struggled, both with jobs and with housing.

“The demographic of south county — it’s an aging population,” she said. She noted that the area saw a lot of foreclosures between 2007 and 2009, and there has been a push to get those homes back on the market.

She added that in the past 20 years or so, there have been two subdivisions built in Ione, but even those are almost at capacity. Geo-

graphical concerns such as hillier terrain, she said, make the south end of the county more challenging for finding buildable lots, as well.

“People are figuring it out, but it’s hard to find places to live in south county,” she said.

McLane said the planning commission will launch its Buildable Lands Inventory and Housing Analysis in early September. Those involved in the

project will collect data about potential residential land throughout the county. All five incorporated cities will participate, and the project should be completed by March 2019.

“We have lots of anecdotal information, but this is much bigger and broader,” McLane said.

Contact Jayati Ramakrishnan at [jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com](mailto:jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4534.

# BIGFOOT: Database shows one reported sighting for Morrow County

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“If all of a sudden I was face-to-face with the big guy,” she speculated, “I might be freaking out a little bit.”

The Bigfoot Field Research Organization claims to be the only scientific research organization delving into the mystery. The BFRO collects reports of encounters and publishes that information on its website. The organization’s most recent report of an encounter in Oregon was in September 2017 near Dufur in Wasco County, when archery hunters heard a “loud whoop-type sound” several times. Bigfoot researchers and believers assert Bigfoot makes whoops, yowls and screams.

Clackamas County earns the top Bigfoot encounter area with 27 in the organization’s database. Josephine County comes in second with 21 and Douglas is third with 17. Umatilla and Lane are next with 16 sightings

each.

Umatilla County seemed to have a spike in encounters and sightings in the 1990s. The most recent in the database happened in November 2012, when locals heard strange shrieks near Mission on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

The database has one sighting for Morrow County. Two men in March of 1995 reported they were driving in the dark eastbound on Interstate 84 near Boardman when the driver swerved to avoid hitting a possible juvenile Bigfoot.

Howland said her interests have grown in the paranormal and cryptozoology — the study of unknown animals but not an actual science. Her sister is the co-creator of the podcast “The Caravan, The Library of Lore,” which explores the paranormal, and Howland has been on that a couple of times. She attended a few hours of the Bigfoot conference last year and said she

found the speakers and their theories interesting, including Thomas Sewid of Victoria, British Columbia, a Canadian First Nations member who spoke of his tribe’s legends about Dzunukwa, a type of wild woman of the woods, and her relation to myths of Bigfoot.

Howland said she enjoyed the experience and wished she could have stayed longer and mingled a bit.

“I’m hoping I can connect with a couple of people this year and kind of chat,” she said.

If this year’s conference attendance resembles the previous, finding someone for a like-minded conversation will not be nearly as much effort as tracking down a Bigfoot.

You can find out more about the conference here: <https://www.international-bigfootconference.com/>

Contact Phil Wright at [pwright@eastoregonian.com](mailto:pwright@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0833.

# Firefighters who speak Spanish struggle with training translations

By EMILY CURETON  
Associated Press

PORTLAND (AP) — Oscar Miranda spends about 100 nights a year in a tent.

“Mi casa,” he explained. “I have a little cot, so I don’t sleep on the ground.”

Miranda has been a wildland firefighter his entire adult life. At 34, he’s the boss of a crew that hikes into forests too steep and dangerous for fire engines to reach. They work with hand tools to dig up burning logs and put out hidden embers. And most of the crew speaks Spanish.

“When I do my briefings, I have to give them bilingual. I know who I can talk

to in Spanish, and I know who I can talk to in English,” Miranda said.

His career started around the time the government developed bilingual certifications for crew bosses like him, and training courses in Spanish for the rank-and-file firefighters he supervises.

But two years ago, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group stopped offering course materials in Spanish. It said they were out-of-date, and there wasn’t enough demand to redo the translations.

But leaders from private contractors that fight fires disagree.

“We’re like, ‘What the hell. This is a safety issue,’”

said Dillon Sanders, president of the Oregon Firefighting Contractors Association.

He said the end of Spanish-language course offerings blindsided them.

“We weren’t notified. We went to order the material and it wasn’t available,” he said.

Sanders said the trade association is preparing to do the translations itself.

And to some firefighting instructors, the materials are essential. Jaime Pickering works for MQ Franco, one of the largest Hispanic-owned contractors in the Northwest. He trains about 500 new firefighters every year; the vast majority speak Spanish as their first language.



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