

Flag: Outdoor school camper retrieves precious flag



Staff photo by Kathy Aney
Sunridge sixth-grader Atticus Tesch holds a medallion he earned for finding a flag honoring Pendleton Outdoor School co-founder Vern Willcox on Buck Mountain.

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camp hat and a wooden name badge. Buck Mountain, the flag said, “one more time.”

The next month, Diane, Jim Christensen and four others carried the flag to the top of Buck Mountain. Diane picked her way up the steep slope and over a rock face to the top. The 1-mile trek, she said, took her several hours.

On top, the little group gathered to say a few words and sing “Amazing Grace” again. They each scattered some of Vern’s ashes. Before going down the mountain, they hid the flag for sixth-graders to find on the day they climbed up the mountain.

On May 24, Atticus and his fellow campers wel-

comed the challenge.

The campers got some clues. At the top, they should stand on a pile of rocks, look toward camp and search for the flag under shrubs they see from that vantage point.

Atticus, wearing boots and carrying two water bottles, was raring to go. A runner on the Sunridge cross-country team, he took off fast and made it to the top in about 35-40 minutes, 5 minutes before anyone else. After catching his breath, Atticus began looking for the flag. He stood on a pile of rocks, looked toward camp and examined the terrain. Two other campers had arrived and started to search nearby.

“I looked everywhere,” Atticus said. “I lifted a

branch and saw it.”

For his efforts, the sixth-grader received both medallions.

On Monday, he returned the flag to Diane at Sunridge. She thanked him for bringing the banner home. They exchanged stories of their respective treks up the mountain and Diane expressed amazement at how fast Atticus had hiked.

She will keep the flag as a reminder of her high school sweetheart — for a while. The flag will likely end up on top of Buck Mountain next spring for another bunch of campers to find.

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Photo by John Summerfield
Sunridge sixth-grader Atticus Tesch holds two medallions he earned during outdoor school, one for reaching the top of Buck Mountain first and the second for finding a flag honoring Pendleton Outdoor School co-founder Vern Willcox.

Ban: CTUIR adopts new conduct code

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for damaging government property or natural resources, drug and gang activity, sex trafficking, shootings or repeated criminal conduct.

Under the code, the removal and exclusion process must be initiated by the tribal prosecutor or office of legal counsel and each person subject to a petition of removal will go through the tribal court system.

Wright said the tribes must be able to present evidence to prove that the person being removed is a danger to the tribal community.

Wright said he isn’t familiar with all the intricacies of the code, but a judge could either approve a short- or long-term prohibition based on the severity of the offense.

If a person is removed from the reservation and tries to return, Wright said the CTUIR court would take action.

“The court would take steps and they would pay a consequence for that,” he said.

The press release states that the code has been discussed for years, but implementing it took on new urgency “in light of shootings and other violent activity over the past several months.”

One recent incident in December featured a non-tribal member arrested on federal charges after he shot at a house on the reservation.

Wright said violence can happen in cycles, but the reservation remained safe overall.

“For the most part, the reservation is very safe,” he said. “Probably one of the safest in the country.”

U.S. court weighs if climate change violates children’s rights

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

PORTLAND — In a courtroom packed with environmental activists, federal judges wrestled Tuesday with whether climate change violates the constitutional rights of young people who have sued the U.S. government over the use of fossil fuels.

A Justice Department attorney warned three judges from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that allowing the case to go to trial would be unprecedented and open the doors to more lawsuits.

“This case would have earth-shattering consequences,” Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey Clark said.

He called the lawsuit “a direct attack on the separation of powers” and said the 21 young people who filed it want the courts to direct U.S. energy policy, instead of government officials.

The young people are pressing the government to stop promoting the use of fossil fuels, saying sources like coal and oil cause climate change and violate their Fifth Amendment rights to life, liberty and property.

The judges seemed to feel the enormity of the case, which the plaintiffs’ lawyer compared in scope to the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that mandated desegregation of schools in the 1950s.

If the case moves forward, the judiciary would be “dealing with different branches of government and telling them what to do,” said Judge Andrew Hurwitz, instead of issuing court orders telling officials to stop doing something



AP Photo/Steve Dipaola
Supporters attend a rally on Tuesday for a group of young people who filed a lawsuit saying U.S. energy policies are causing climate change and hurting their future.

deemed unconstitutional.

The dire threat to people, particularly the young, demands such action, said Julia Olson, chief legal counsel for Our Children’s Trust, which is representing the plaintiffs.

“When our great-grandchildren look back on the 21st century, they will see that government-sanctioned climate destruction was the constitutional issue of this century,” Olson told the judges.

The lawsuit asks the courts to declare federal energy policy that contributes to climate change unconstitutional, order the government to quickly phase out carbon dioxide emissions to a certain level by 2100 and

mandate a national climate recovery plan.

The Obama and Trump administrations have tried to get the case dismissed since it was filed in Oregon in 2015.

“It’s just really disappointing to see the lengths that they go to — to not only not let us get the remedy that we’re seeking, but not even let us have the chance to prove our facts or present our case at trial,” said Nathan Baring, a 19-year-old from Fairbanks, Alaska, who joined the lawsuit when he was 15.

Baring said a social media campaign in the early days featured the hashtag #Kids-vsGov, which was changed to #YouthvsGov as they

got older.

“I think eventually it’s just going to have to be #AdultsvsGov,” Baring said, laughing.

As the case drags on, sea ice that protects coastal Alaska communities from fierce storms is forming later in the year, leaving those villages vulnerable, he said.

The young people argue that government officials have known for more than 50 years that carbon pollution from fossil fuels causes climate change and that policies promoting oil and gas deprive them of their constitutional rights.

Lawyers for President Donald Trump’s administration say the young people didn’t find any “historical

basis for a fundamental right to a stable climate system or any other constitutional right related to the environment.”

The lawsuit says the young are more vulnerable to serious effects from climate change in the future. The American Academy of Pediatrics, 14 other health organizations and nearly 80 scientists and doctors agreed in a brief filed with the appeals court.

They pointed out that the World Health Organization estimates 88% of the global health burden of climate change falls on children younger than 5.

The case has become a focal point for many youth activists, and the courtroom in Portland was packed.