

## Local Hot Shot crew becomes national resource for fire fighting



Local Hot Shot crew after returning from the Southwest.

The Forest Crew Organization was started in 1984 after it was realized there was enough interest in local community to have an organized 20-person crew to do forestry work, says Mike Gomez, a fire management employee. This crew would also be trained as an organized fire fighting crew. The crew was placed under the Fire Management section of the BIA Forestry Department for program administration purposes.

During the first year of operation, the crew spent part of the year completing forestry work such as tree planting, tree inspecting, herbicide spraying, and prescribed burning. The remainder of the year was spent fighting wild fires, says Gomez.

In 1986 the crew began obtaining work contracts from other BIA

departments and private contractors. The work consisted of squirrel guard installations, mistletoe eradication, rehab burning, fuel break construction, and trail maintenance. The crew also provided prescribed fire work for the Forest Service involving mop-up and handline construction around clearcut units says Gomez. We were also improving in fire fighting skills. The crew became self sufficient in 1986, but was still part of the tribal organization. However, we obtained all our funding through work contracts to be able to operate, says Gomez. "At the same time, we, as a crew, decided to offer our services as a type-one hotshot fire crew."

In 1988 the Warm Springs crew became nationally recognized as the first all Indian contract Interagency

hotshot crew, says Gomez. We were not funded Federally to operate, except for 80 hours of annual training and logistical support. The crew was administered by the BIA, and listed as a BIA hotshot crew to assure user organizations that we meet all national standards as a type-I crew.

Also in 1988 the crew began obtaining work contracts from Warm Springs Forest Products Industries (WSFPI). The crew also obtained handline construction projects and prescribed burn blocks that would have been burned by using aerial ignition. We completed 80 percent of the burning on the reservation and continued to contract work from the BIA, WSFPI and the Forest Service.

As of 1990, the Warm Springs Interagency Hot Shot Crew Organization employs 21 permanent

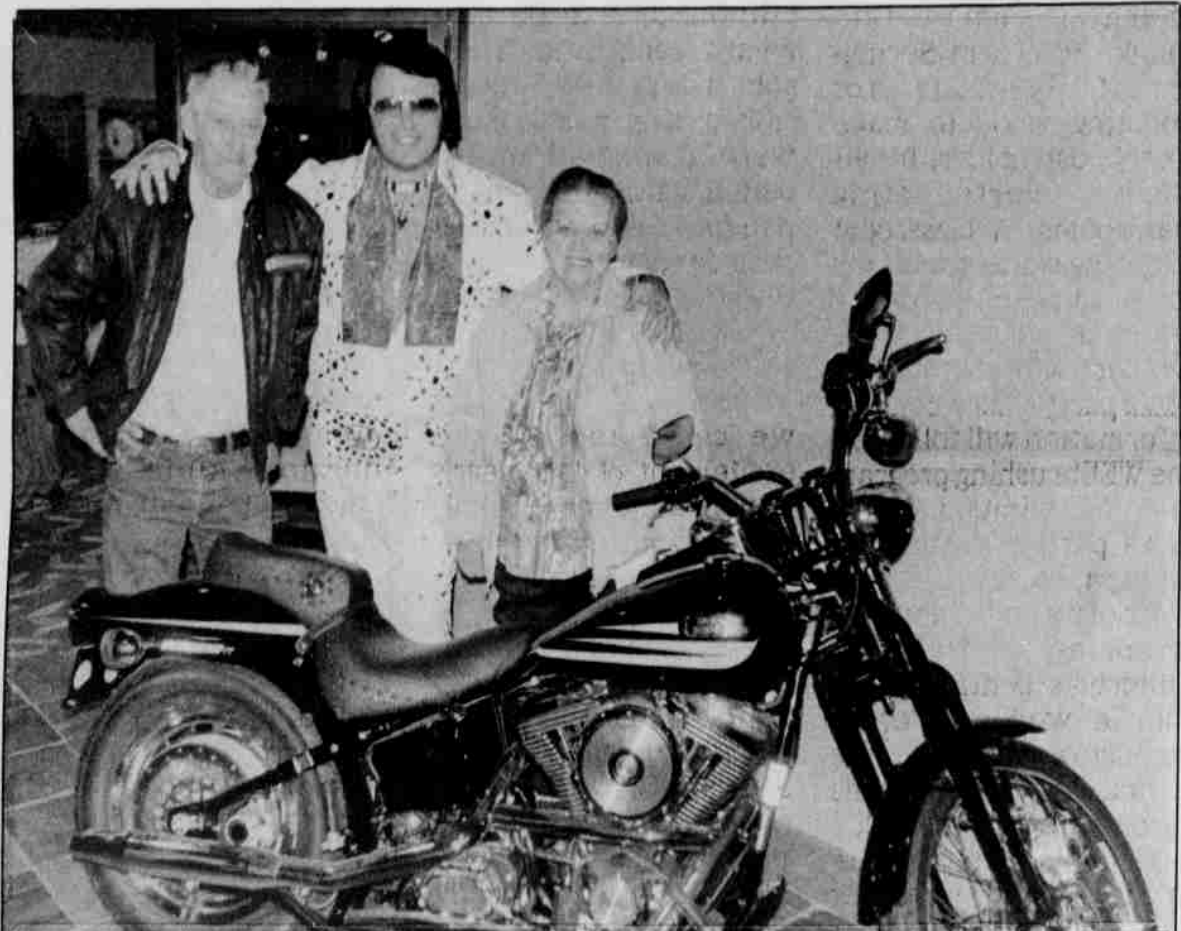


Hot Shot in action, fighting fire in the Southwest.

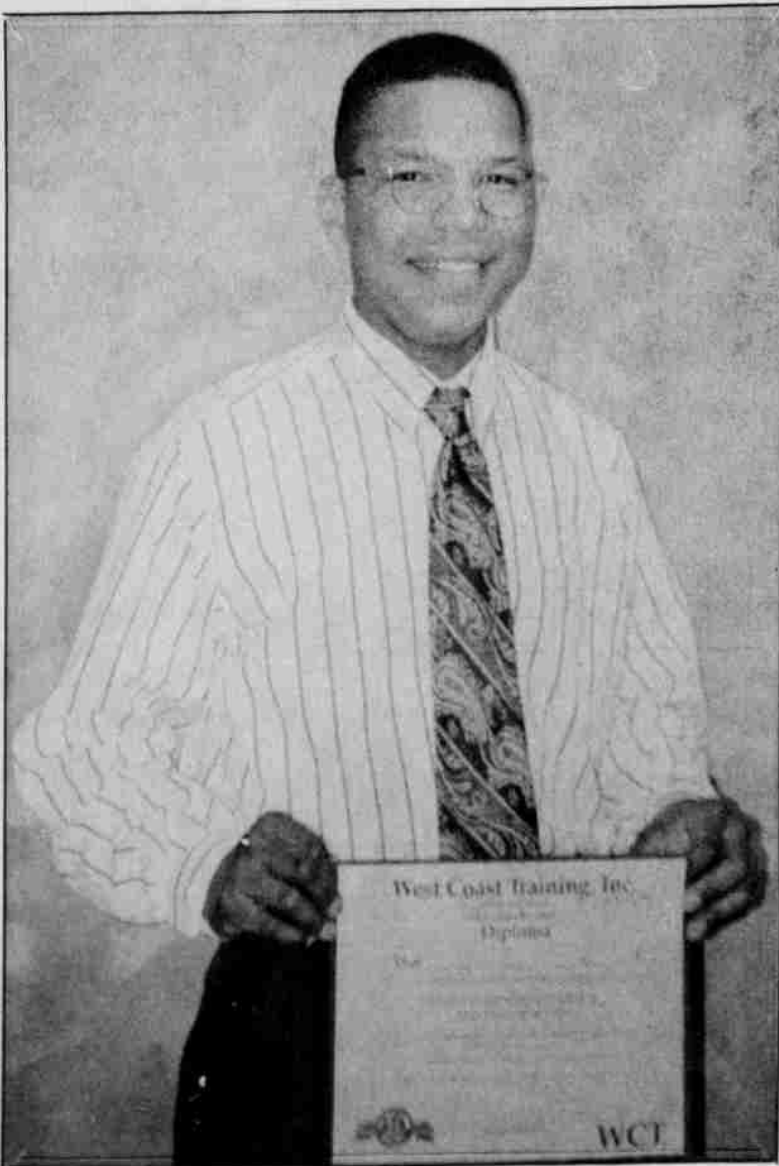
and furlough individuals with over half of them being tribal members, says Gomez. Since our operation began, we tried to teach our employees different types of forestry work. The experience is not major, but it's a start, advises Gomez. One of our intentions for this crew is to provide a resource of American Indians interested in the Forestry area says Mike, when vacancies occur in the BIA, BLM or the Forest Service, we'll

have interested people that we can refer to the proper people, says Gomez. In 1991 Warm Springs resident and Tribal Member Luther Clements became the superintendent for the crew and has taken them as far down as Mexico and Texas, and as far north as Canada and Alaska. So far this year on April 25, the crew was dispatched to White Springs, Arizona on the Fort Apache Reservation. The crew spent four

days constructing hand line to contain the fire which burned about 40,000 acres. The crew was then transferred to the Clark Peak fire in Safford, Arizona in the Coronado National Forest. The fire was 60,000 acres in size, Clements and the crew spent twelve days there and were back home in Warm Springs on May 14, says acting Fire Management officer, Mike Gomez. "Hard telling where they will end up next"



Elvis Presley is alive and well and was recently seen performing at Indian Head Gaming Center, during the Memorial Day weekend. Well, maybe not the real Elvis, but Elvis impersonator David Moore from Molalla, Oregon. Moore sure got peoples' attention singing all of Elvis's songs for visitors, tourists and local people. On May 27, at 7 p.m. Elvis also gave away a 1996 Harley Davidson motorcycle to happy winner Margie Johnson of Redmond.



Warm Springs resident and tribal member Leo Washington Jr. recently completed heavy equipment and basic surveying training. Leo, received a certificate of completion with a 3.5 G.P.A. after concluding his training on May 24 from West Coast Training Inc. out of Woodland, Washington.

## Annual HeHe Spiritfest set for July 5, 6, 7

The annual HeHe Spiritfest will be held July 5, 6 and 7. The three-day event will focus on alcohol and drug awareness and encourages AA, NA, Al-Anon, Ala-Teen and ACOA participation.

Friday's activities include a potluck dinner, an AA meeting and a modern dance.

Saturday will begin with breakfast (on your own), 12-step recovery meetings, games and other activities, dinner at 5 p.m. followed by an Indian Night Out powwow.

Sunday will feature a spiritual breakfast.

For those not familiar with the Warm Springs Reservation, HeHe is located 18 miles north of Warm Springs just off US Highway 26. Camping is available. RVs are welcome but there are no hookups available. Participants must bring cook stoves that meet fire regulations. Kah-Nee-Ta Resort also offers accommodations. For reservation at the Resort, call 553-1112 or 1-800-554-4786.

For registration and more information, call 553-1127, 553-1289, 553-1729 or 478-2576. Registration can also be mailed to PO Box 728, Warm Springs, OR 97761.

## EMS Week observed in Warm Springs

On Thursday May 23, at the Warm Springs Community Center, members of the emergency medical group of Jefferson County and Warm Springs Fire and Safety participated in the National Emergency Medical Service week.

Emergency medical technicians were at hand with fire trucks and other emergency vehicles to answer questions from the public.

The event started at 12 noon with activities such as wheel chair and gurney races where members of the tribal organization and Indian Health Service participated. Hot dogs and hamburgers were also served to the public cooked by volunteers and members of Warm Springs Fire and Safety department.

A life-like three vehicle mock traffic accident was included. Emergency technicians brought out the jaws of life to rescue the "injured". The mock accident was treated like the real thing using real people which included adults, children, and a fake infant doll.



Sparky shakes hand with robot.



Jaws of life were demonstrated from the mock accident at the Community Center.