

# Increasing violence worries reservation: suicide, homicide more common

This article is reprinted from the Bend Bulletin at the request of Community Counseling staff member. It was written by Matt Sabo.

The man who lay in the puddle of blood wore what Ella Jane Jim recognized as a familiar coat. Her grandson, William Suppah, wore a coat like that one.

Police had summoned Jim to a spot along Foster Road near her home in Warm Springs to identify the young man who had been beaten almost to death. It was early in the morning and the man's red coat was familiar.

His face? No. It was a bloody, puffy mess, his eyes mere slits, Jim remembers later. She did not recognize that face.

Jim looked at the man's white basketball shoes. She knew those shoes. They were William's.

William Suppah, an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, father of 2-year-old daughter Elizabeth, a big, strong man who loved basketball and looking after his grandparents, was 22 when his grandmother identified him by his shoes on the morning of February 20.

On March 10 Suppah turned 23 in a hospital room at St. Charles Medical Center. His family is hoping for his recovery but does not know if the William Suppah they knew, a young man they say was always smiling, never sick and scared of hospitals, will ever be the same.

"It's hard to believe that something like this would touch our family," said Lou Farrow,

Suppah's aunt, as she sat in a waiting room with Jim. "Until it touches you family, you don't really believe it's going to happen."

Amid a culture of success in Warm Springs—tribal officials speak with pride of Kah-Nee-Ta Resort, the Warm Springs Forest Products mill, a museum and the new casino—a culture of violence seems to have emerged as well.

Tribal youths are running in gangs and abusing drugs and alcohol. On the same day that Suppah was viciously beaten and stomped, 31-year-old Stacey Lillie was stabbed to death, his throat slit and his body dumped in a ravine on the Warm Springs-area road.

He allegedly was killed by a 16-year-old boy and a young adult accomplice.

Last June 29, 17-year-old Warm Springs resident David Belgarde, Jr. shot and wounded 24-year-old Edward Calfooking at a party and was subsequently taken into tribal juvenile custody. He was released on July 19.

Less than 24 hours later Belgarde shot 21-year-old Damean "Bear" Frank at a party during a dispute. Frank died that day at St. Charles Medical Center.

This past winter three young Warm Springs residents died in two separate traffic accidents. Alcohol was a factor in both accidents.

### Growing violence

Reservations across America are no strangers to violence. Although Warm Springs Indian Reservation statistics were unavailable, Bureau of Indian Affairs statistics show that the leading causes of death nationwide among American Indian

men ages 15 to 24 are motor vehicle accidents, suicide and homicide—at nearly three times the combined rate as white males in the same age bracket.

BIA statistics also reveal that alcohol plays a significant part in deaths among American Indian men ages 25 to 44. BIA figures show American Indian men:

- Die in motor vehicle accidents—many alcohol-related—at a rate of 71 per 100,000 residents, compared to a rate of 17 per 100,000 among white males;

- Die of chronic liver disease or cirrhosis at a rate of 36 per 100,000, compared to five per 100,000 among white males;

- Are victims of homicide at a rate of 24 per 100,000, compared to a rate of eight per 100,000 among white males.

The violence and deaths in Warm Springs, including tribal member Luther Danzuka, who died of a rattlesnake bite after being denied medical attention while in police custody, spawned outrage. In turn, a group of residents sought change in the form of a referendum, which called for a suspension of public safety department funds and the ouster of certain tribal officials.

The referendum narrowly passed in January, but the tribal council reversed course and added \$525,000 to the police budget. Coupled with federal law enforcement grants, the money will bolster the police force by seven officers, said Jody Calica, chief operating officer of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

As a result, there's talk of a recall of tribal council members. But Calica,

51, said the people in Warm Springs need to get past the divisiveness and fight fire with fire.

### Return to roots

The issues go beyond more cops, Calica said. He estimates the Warm Springs people—a collection of the Warm Springs band of the Walla Walla tribe, the Wasco and the Northern Paiute—go back 800 generations.

It has taken less than two generations for their traditional salmon fishing spots to be flooded by dams and for their language to be nearly lost, mainly because it was suppressed in boarding schools, which also stripped his people of their kinship and identity, he said.

"We need to build back some understanding of traditional values and beliefs and relationships," Calica said. "What values, beliefs, practices and teachings kept us together for 800 generations and what can we do to get back to those?"

Calica talks of improving the range of services of Warm Springs residents, from early childhood to health to education. Especially education.

Half of all Warm Springs children drop out of school before earning a diploma. The truancy rate for tribal youth approaches 50 percent.

The tribes have embarked on a program to reintroduce young students to their native language, which Calica said is a "step in illuminating who we are as people."

Among young people, the tribes must try to "restore some of their own educational skills so they have marketable employment skills, so they can do something productive with their lives," Calica said.

Calica wants to attract capital for economic development to provide long-term sustainable jobs. He wants to foster a sense of community, to have residents identify their own problems, identify remedies and hold themselves accountable.

### Youth attracted to gangs

William Suppah's grandfather, Nathan Jim, Sr., has lost two sons to suicide and bemoans the influx of drugs and alcohol, the loss of cultural beliefs and traditions and the fascination among young tribal members with gangs.

"There has been quite a number of increased things related to drugs and the mixing of alcohol and drugs," Nathan Jim said. "There's been a lot of theft going on, elder abuse and burglaries because they want to support their habits."

From his home on Foster Street, a West Hills neighborhood of run-down houses with busted out or boarded-up windows, "you can go any direction and find drugs," Nathan Jim said.

On his front porch his grandson, 17-year-old William Napyer, remembers that he overheard Suppah arguing on the phone on the morning he died. Napyer, who is dressed in a white T-shirt and baggy black pants and talks in gang lingo of "sets" and "getting jumped," said Suppah is like a brother.

"I was telling him to stay home but he wouldn't listen to me," Napyer said over the sound of rap music blaring out an open window.

Napyer said he has earned respect by fighting everyone in the neighborhood. He agreed that gangs are prevalent but when asked the

name of his gang, he shook his head.

The gang problem will intensify, Napyer believes. "I think it's going to get worse," he said. "All the younger kids are in gangs."

Wesley Smith, who counts Suppah as a friend, agrees. Smith, 26, said he used to run with gangs. He has been shot at, stabbed twice and run afoul of the law for theft and drug possession.

His cousin Casey Smith is serving five years in a federal prison for shooting and killing a man four years ago at a Warm Springs party. But Smith said his gang-banging days are over. "I grew up and got a job," he said.

Smith, shooting baskets at a park in Warm Springs, said he plans to become a wildfire firefighter. The training "keeps me busy so I'm not out on the streets here gettin' into mischief," Smith said.

That doesn't mean he doesn't hear the occasional challenges from old rivals as he walks around town. "I just keep walking," Smith said. "It's best to keep your head up and not get pulled back into the same old mischief."

He said tribal leaders should find ways to keep young people busy—Napyer said if the tribal basketball courts and ball fields were in better shape he might play sports rather than run with troublemakers—"instead of havin' nothin' to do but get high and drunk."

Wesley Smith said he is worried about his generation. "I don't see this generation going too far at the rate it's going," he said. "We're all related in some way but the gang thing is keeping us apart."

## Violent crimes twice the rate for American Indians

American Indians are victims of violent crimes more than twice the rate of all US residents and in nearly three-quarters of the cases their assailants are not Indian, according to a study released by the Justice Department.

In its first comprehensive analysis of Indians and crime, the department's Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that from 1992 through 1996 the average annual rate of violent victimization's among Indians 12 years and older was 124 per 4,000 residents, compared with 61 for blacks, 49 for whites and 29 for Asians. There are about 2.3 million Native Americans in the United States just under 1 percent of the population.

Among instances of violence against Indians, 60 percent of the offenders were white, 10 percent were black and 30 percent were described in crime reports as "other" but were likely to have been other Native Americans, the report said. The high rate of white offenders is partly attributable to the fact that half or more of the residents on many tribal lands are white.

"The findings reveal a disturbing picture of American Indian involvement in crimes as victims and offenders. Both male and female American Indians experience violent crime at higher rates than people of other races and are more likely to

experience interracial violence," said Jan Chaiken, director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

The news was no surprise to Theodore R. Quasula, chief of the law enforcement division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Quasula has long pleaded for more federal funds to beef up understaffed and poorly equipped police forces on reservations.

"I hate to say 'I told you so,'" Quasula said in a telephone interview from his office in Albuquerque. "The rate would probably be even higher if we had computerized crime reporting in Indian country."

The FBI's Uniform Crime Report shows that while there are 2.9 police officers per 1,000 citizens in non-Indian communities with populations of less than 10,000 on Indian reservations there are 1.3 officers per 1,000 citizens. There are 1,600 BIA police and uniformed tribal officers patrolling 56 million acres of Indian lands in the lower 48 states protecting more than 1.4 million residents. By contrast 3,600 police officers serve the 540,000 residents of the District.

For the current fiscal year, Congress added \$20 million to the BIA's \$82 million law enforcement budget. But Quasula said \$500 million would be needed to bring patrolling and detention facilities on reservations to an acceptable level. "It's a good start, but we've got quite a way

to go," he said.

The Justice report said that 150 American Indians are murdered each year which is close to the per capita rate in the general population. But the study found that Indians were two to three times more likely to become victims in each of the categories of sexual assaults, robberies, aggravated assaults and simple assaults than whites and blacks. In each category Indians were two to seven times as likely to be victims as Asians.

In cases of rape or sexual assault against Indians, 82 percent of the offenders were white, 6 percent black and 12 percent "other", most likely meaning Indian. Two-thirds or more of the American Indian victims of robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault described the offender as belonging to a different race.

The study found the arrest rate for alcohol-related nonviolent offenses among American Indians—such as drunk driving, liquor law violations and public drunkenness was more than double that for the total population during 1996. The Indians rate of confinement in local jails was estimated to be nearly four times the national average and almost four in 10 Indians held in local jails had been charged with a public order offense, most commonly driving while intoxicated.

This article is taken from the Washington Post National News, Voc-rehab department requested it be in the Spilyay Tymoo.

## Fishing season April 1 to July 31 at Bonneville and John Day pools

Today, the Compact states of Oregon and Washington agreed with the Columbia River treaty tribes to open the spring season setline fishery in the Bonneville and John Day pools.

**SPRING SEASON SETLINE OPENING:** Opens at noon Thursday, April 1, 1999 and ending at 6 p.m. July 31. A Compact hearing may be scheduled in the future to consider an earlier closing date if the harvest guidelines are expected to be met before July 31.

**Area:** Bonneville and John Day Pools only. No setline fishery in the Dalles Pool.

**Restrictions:** Hook size must be 9/0 or larger. Tribal fishers are encouraged to use circle-hooks and avoid J-hooks. All river mouth and

dam sanctuaries remain in effect.

**Allowable Sales:** The allowable sale during the Bonneville and John Day Pool setline season will be restricted to sturgeon, Chinook, sockeye, and steelhead may not be sold.

**Sturgeon Size Limit:** Sturgeon between 4 feet 5 inches in length may be sold commercially or kept for subsistence.

**Sturgeon Catch Guidelines:** The sturgeon catch guideline for the Bonneville Pool is 1,300 and for the John Day Pool is 1,160 sturgeon. The estimated harvest at the close of the winter commercial gillnet season was 380 and 330, respectively, leaving approximately 920 and 820 sturgeon available for harvest in each of the Bonneville and John Day pool.

The sturgeon catch in The Dalles pool is at the lower end of the harvest guideline range of 1,000-1,200.

**Scaffold Fishery:** The scaffold fishery remains open year-around. Scaffold catch of sturgeon may be sold during open commercial fishing periods.

If you have any fishing enforcement problems or need assistance of information, day or night, contact the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement Office, 4270 Westcliff Drive, Hood River, OR. Phone: (541) 386-6363 or toll-free (800)-487-FISH (3474). Please consult your tribal Fish and Wildlife Committee for additional details on tribal regulations. Please wear your life jackets for safety.

## Domestic Awareness month activities planned

April is a month of Family Strengthening/ Domestic Violence Awareness.

"It takes a whole community to stop domestic violence"

Activities planned at the health and wellness Center:

4/28-Wednesday from 9 am to Noon in Atrium \*Susie Rosen, COBRA Workplace Violence Training Workshop

Will be giving purple ribbons to wear as a sign of support.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please get in contact with Dr. Locker or Montell at 553-2482. We hope that everyone will participate in some way and show support. We all know somebody effected by domestic violence and support is a key to helping.

## We drank for...

We drank for joy and became miserable. We drank for sociability and became argumentative. We drank for sophistication and became obnoxious. We drank for friendship and became enemies. We drank to help us sleep and awakened exhausted. We drank to gain strength, and it made us weaker. We drank for exhilaration and ended up depressed. We drank for "medical reasons" and acquired health problems. We drank to help us calm down and ended up with the shakes. We drank to get more confidence and became afraid. We drank to make conversation more easily, and the words came out slurred and incoherent. We drank to diminish our problems and saw them multiply. We drank to feel heavenly and ended up feeling like hell.

### Encounter

*I see my enemy approaching,  
My attack of words lies in wait.*

*Shall I strike his fragile skin  
with the spear of sarcasm,  
or shoot the arrows  
Of humiliation straight through the heart?*

*My adversary nears;  
what if I shove the knife of mockery deep,  
or stun him with the hatchet of verbal shame?*

*With which weapon  
should I wound my opponent?  
My heart pounds with wrath.*

*Ego stands ready for the encounter,  
to defeat and crush my contender.*

*But wait!  
My foe is waving a white flag;  
Now what shall I do?*

*By Howard Rainer,  
"A Song for Mother Earth"*



Sparky the dog, Smokey the Bear, and McGruff help celebrate Week Of The Young Child at ECE during career day April 20.

## North American Indian Prose Award 1999 call for entries

The University of Nebraska Press invites book-length nonfiction manuscripts to be considered for the seventh annual North American Indian Prose Award.

The annual award, co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska Press and the University of California, Berkeley, is given on the basis of literary merit, originality, and familiarity with North American Indian life. The competition invites biography, autobiography, history, literary criticism, essays, nonfiction works for children, and political commentary; it includes fiction, poetry, interviews, drama, and work previously published in book form. The award is open exclusively to persons of North American Indian descent. The winner receives a cash advance of \$1000 and publication of the award-winning manuscript by the University of Nebraska Press.

The annual deadline for submissions is July 1. Finalists are chosen by November 1, the author of the award-winning manuscript notified by January of the following year. A public award ceremony will be held at the Newberry Library in Chicago upon publication of the book.

Previous winners include Leroy TeCuba, a water quality specialist of Dulce, New Mexico; Brenda Child, an assistant professor of history at

the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Vietnam veteran Vincent Mendoza of Tulsa, Oklahoma; novelist W.S. Penn, an associate professor of English at Michigan State University; K. Tsianina Lomawaima, an associate professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona; Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, a longtime public school educator and children's book author of Rapid City, South Dakota; and poet and novelist Diane Glancy of Macalester College.

Competition rules and submission guidelines are below. Manuscripts and queries should be directed to: North American Indian Prose Award, University of Nebraska Press, 312 N. 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68588-0484, or gdunham@unlinfo.unl.edu

Rules for entry:  
1. Manuscripts must be prose book-length nonfiction. Novels, short stories, interviews, drama, and poetry will not be considered. Eligible manuscripts include history, biography, autobiography, literary criticism, essays, nonfiction works for children, and political commentary.  
2. Manuscripts must be previously unpublished in book form. They may include parts that have been published in journals, but all rights and permissions must be secured by the author.

3. Manuscripts may not be under consideration at another press.

4. Manuscripts must be submitted in double-spaced typescript. Improperly prepared typescripts will be returned to the authors unread.

5. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a return envelope with adequate return postage.

6. The competition and awards are limited exclusively to people of North American Indian descent. Authors should include a resume or brief autobiographical sketch.

7. Manuscripts submitted for the award will be considered for publication on their own merits, whether or not they win the award.

Winners of the North American Indian Prose Award

1990-Diane Glancy, Claiming Breath

1991-Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, Completing the Circle

1992-K. Tsianina Lomawaima, They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School

1993-W.S. Penn, All My Sins Are Relatives

1994-Vincent Mendoza, Son of Two Bloods

1995-Brenda Child, Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940

1996-Leroy TeCuba, Year in Nam: A Native American Soldier's Story