

Region wins \$11.7 million for poverty

The Northwest Area Foundation of St. Paul, Minn., has committed \$11.7 million over the next decade to combat poverty throughout Central Oregon, including Warm Springs.

An agreement between the foundation and the Central Oregon Partnership, signed Aug. 1, calls for the funding of a network of Community Action Teams in Bend, LaPine, Madras, Prineville,

Redmond, Sisters and Warm Springs. The teams will develop an initiative to attack the root causes of poverty.

Central Oregon is the second region in the county to win final approval and funding for such a plan.

"We are beyond happy that the NWAFA selected our region for consideration of this incredible partnership," said Bill Willitts, chairman of the steering committee that

has worked the past two years to craft the plan.

"It means that for 10 years we'll be able to make a concerted and creative effort to see if we can reduce the root causes of poverty in a region about which we all care so deeply."

Members of the committee include Willitts, Eric Alexander, Jolene Estimo Atencio, Marilyn Beem, Lynne and John Breese,

Jerry Colonna, Becky Lu Hammer, Clint Jacks, Mary Krenowicz, Jim Lussier, Jessie Macias, Jill Phillips-McLane, Julie Quaid and Kris Rees.

The organization will form over the next few months, with extensive planning, recruitment and other activities. Karl Stauber, foundation president, will visit Central Oregon in early October to meet with the partnership and others.

Pre-teens sought for sitter class

Children age 11 to 13 may now register for the Safe Sitter course that will be offered on at Mountain View Hospital District in Madras. The 8 - hour Safe Sitter program will begin Tuesday, August 14th, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, and is being held in the Community Education Room. To pre-register, or for more information, call the Mountain View Hospital District Wellness office at 475-3882 extension 2307.

Sponsored by Mountain View Hospital District, the Safe Sitter program instructs youngsters on how to handle emergencies when caring for younger children.

The goal of Safe Sitter is to reduce preventable deaths among children being cared for by babysitters. Thousands of adolescents across the country have been trained in Safe Sitter.

Students receive hands-on practice in basic life saving techniques as well as instruction in security precautions such as what to do if a stranger comes to the door. The sitter will also learn information on child development and age appropriate activities.

Financial literacy

The Small Business Development Center is sponsoring ONABEN Financial Literacy classes.

Whether you want to start a

business, buy a home, or pay off your debt, personal financial literacy is a first step to gaining control over your financial future. The series runs for six weeks. Classes will be held at the SBDC from 6-9 p.m. Sept. 18; Sept. 25; Oct. 2; Oct. 9; Oct. 17; Oct. 23.

For more information or to register, contact SBDC at 553-3592.

Summer classes set

August 13 - 14, 2001: K - 6th Grades - Cost: \$2.50 per student
10 am - 12 Noon: Weaving & Twining
Instructor: Eileen Spino
August 13 - 14, 2001: 7th - 12th Grades - Cost: \$4.00 per student
2 pm - 5 pm: Corn Husk Weaving Class
Instructor: Eileen Spino

August 15 - 16, 2001: K - 6th Grades - Cost: \$2.50 per student
10 am - 12 Noon: Bead Weaving & Loom work
Instructor: Dorothy "Pebbles" George

August 15 - 16, 2001: 7th - 12th Grades - Cost: \$4.00 per student
2 pm - 5 pm: Advanced Beading Projects
Instructor: Dorothy "Pebbles" George

August 17, 2001: Higher Ed. Students - Cost: \$5.00 per student
9 am - 12 Noon: Corn Husk Weaving
Instructor: Eileen Spino

August 17, 2001: Higher Ed. Students - Cost: \$5.00 per student
2 pm - 5 pm: Advanced Beading Projects
Instructor: Dorothy "Pebbles" George

Keeping his cool



Photo by Jerry Brunoe
The dunk tank (manned by Percy Winishut, 17) proved to be a popular attraction this week during the Family Jamboree. Warm temperatures pretty much guaranteed anything involving water would draw a crowd.

Foster mother gets prison term for death of young boy

Tamera Coffee recently was sentenced to 6 1/2 years in federal prison for causing the death last year of 4-year-old Andres E. Saragos. Coffee, 34, will begin serving her sentence on Sept. 13.

Coffee pleaded guilty earlier this year to second-degree murder in the death of the child, who had been in her foster care. Coffee's arrest happened in early July of 2000, after Andres Saragos, left in a vehicle on a hot summer day, died of heat stroke.

The 6 1/2-year prison sentence was the recommended term included in her plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The judge in the case also imposed a five-year period of post-prison supervision.

At the hearing last week, assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Williams argued to the court that Coffee should be taken into custody on the date of the sentencing. However, Coffee's attorney, Andrew Bates of Portland, said there was no reason for such action.

The judge ruled with the defense, giving Coffee six weeks before having to surrender to custody.

Coffee had been on pre-trial release from custody since a short time after her arrest in July 2000, the time of Saragos' death.

She had presented no problems to the court during that time, a main factor in why the start of her prison term was delayed until Sept. 13.

During her sentencing hearing in federal court last week, Coffee declined the opportunity to make a verbal statement regarding the crime.

The natural mother of the child, Vernice Switzler, did, however, make a brief comment. She mentioned how the death of Andres has been devastating for her other children.

In recounting Switzler's testimony, assistant U.S. Attorney Williams said last week, "She and her children want to know why this happened, and they want to know why she is still out of custody."

The children are having a hard time understanding why Coffee, while admitting to second-degree murder of their brother Andres, is still not in prison, Williams said.

"It's very difficult for Ms. Switzler and her children to see Tamera Coffee in public on the reservation," Williams said.

Committee members sworn

Tribal committee members were sworn into office this week.

Many of the members sworn in this week also have served on the same committees during the past term.

The terms of the committee members are for approximately three years, or until approximately 60 days following the end of the Tribal Council terms.

The swearing-in ceremony for the new committee members happened Monday morning, Aug. 6, in front of the Tribal Administration Building.

Members of the Culture and Heritage Committee are Viola

Kalama, Emily Waheneka, Margaret Suppah, Brigitte Whipple, Madeline McInturff and Gladys Thompson.

Members of the Education Committee are Urbana Ross, Colleen Johnson, Ramona Tanewasha, Martha Winishut and Alyssa Macy.

Members of the Fish and Wildlife Off-Reservation Committee are Harold Blackwolf Sr., Olney Patt Jr., Claude Smith Sr. and Terry Courtney Jr.

Members of the Fish and Wildlife On-Reservation Committee are Donald Winishut Sr., Tony Suppah, Elmer Scott Jr. and Leslie

Traditional leave ...

Bill. The Health and Welfare Committee members are Janice Clements, Robert Miller, Urbana Manion and Geneva Charley.

The Land-Use Planning Committee members are Phillip Florendo, Lepha Smith, Moses Kalama and Lee Tom.

The Range, Irrigation and Agriculture Committee members are Evans Spino, Jacob Frank Sr., Jay Suppah and Carmella Scott.

The Timber Committee members are Reginald Winishut, Theron Johnson, Max Jackson and Raymond Moody.

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In his initial research, Heath then reviewed basic documents of the tribes, such as the Constitution and Bylaws, and the Comprehensive Plan, the Organizational and the Management plans, for instance.

All of these documents include statements regarding the need to preserve culture and languages, Heath said. For this reason, a traditional leave policy would be in keeping with the purpose of the tribal government, he said.

With direction from Tribal Council, Heath then reviewed the traditional leave policies that other tribes have adopted. Working with a group of traditional food gatherers and preparers, Heath developed a draft policy for Council review, which the Council considered in June.

The Tribal Council is scheduled to review a revised draft policy on August 28.

The revised draft states that the traditional leave policy would apply to any tribal member worker, in the employment of the tribes, who is an active practitioner of a traditional tribal religion of one of the three Confederated Tribes.

Such an employee could take "leave from employment with full pay and benefits to participate in all traditional religious activities of the Confederated Tribes," according to the proposed draft policy.

"The extent of such leave," the draft states, "is dependent on the specific role of the employee in an approved activity and shall include sufficient time for preparation prior to the event and rest after the event before the Traditional Practitioner must report back to work."

The proposed policy includes a list of specific activities to which the traditional leave policy would apply. Also, the proposed policy would apply to an employee taking a Ichishkin, Kikshut or Numu language class, with a 2-hour per week limitation.

The draft policy says that an employee taking traditional leave must "ensure that job duties are maintained and participation in traditional events and any adverse impacts to the work site are minimized."

The employee must give his or her immediate supervisor prior notice that the employee will be taking leave from employment. The supervisor would then document the leave, and report it to the payroll department.

Trial date scheduled for murder suspects

An October trial date has been set for the three Warm Springs youths accused of murder in the death of Michael Saludo, whose body was discovered July 12.

Last week, the three suspects - Ronald McKinley, 23, Angelo Fuentes, 22, and Tony Gilbert Jr., 18 - were arraigned on federal grand jury indictments charging first-degree murder and robbery.

Each of the suspects was also charged with felony murder, meaning they are accused of having committed murder during the commis-

sion of a felony crime, robbery.

Following the arraignment, the suspects, each of whom is a tribal member, entered pleas of not guilty. Michael Saludo also was a tribal member.

The suspects, facing a possible life sentence if convicted of first-degree or felony murder, remain in federal custody in Portland. The judge has set Oct. 2 as the trial date.

Michael Saludo was 26 at the time of his death. His body was discovered at the Lower Dry Creek Campground.

Antelope tags made available

The Confederated Tribes has secured a total of 27 tags to hunt pronghorn antelope on ceded lands during the 2001 season in Oregon. The tags are being offered through the tribal Natural Resources Branch and the deadline to sign-up is Aug. 10.

Tribal members 12 years of age and older are eligible for the tags. Youngsters must complete a Hunter's Safety Education class.

If there are more interested hunters than available tags, a drawing will be held to determine the recipients. The 27 tags being offered through the Natural Resources Branch involve 10 separate Oregon hunts.

Tag holders must follow all rules established by the state of Oregon for hunting pronghorn antelope.

For more information stop by or call Natural Resources at 553-2002.

Chief Heath taken to hospital

Warm Springs Chief Delvis Heath was hospitalized for four days last week. After some rest, Chief Heath, 62, earlier this week said he was "feeling great."

Chief Heath and other members of the Tribal Council last week traveled to Las Vegas for a seminar. At the seminar on Wednesday afternoon, Heath mentioned that he was not feeling well. Joe Moses, sworn in recently as Chief of the Seekseequa District, then drove Heath to the hospital in Las Vegas.

At the time, there was some concern about the possibility of a stroke, but Heath this week said the problem had to do with going off his special diet, combined with a lack of rest.

He was in the hospital in Las Vegas from Wednesday until Saturday afternoon. He flew home that night, and on Monday said he was feeling fine. Heath has been Warm Springs Chief for close to 20 years.

Budget proposals ...

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While reducing expenditures in 2002, the Tribal Council must also ensure that adequate funding is budgeted for essential government services such as police and fire safety, delivery of drinking water, and treatment of wastewater.

While the recommended annual reduction of \$600,000 will not be easy, the situation could have been worse. For instance, last year, in developing a 10-year budget projection, tribal officials anticipated a need to reduce the budget by as

much as \$1.2 million for 2002. The reduction number now being considered is half that amount.

Also on a more positive note, the need to reduce the budget has generated some new ideas in how to meet community needs with limited tribal government revenue, said Willy Fuentes, chief operations officer.

For instance, the tribes could see some benefits through work with private foundations, Fuentes said.

"If there is a silver lining to the

dark cloud of the budget cuts, it is that the tribal leadership is now looking hard at other opportunities," Fuentes said.

Secretary-treasurer Jackson added that the tribes' budget situation, while a difficult one, is not dire.

"Right now, we have room to maneuver and make adjustments, and we have the wherewithal to make investments to increase future revenue," Jackson said. "But we are entering a time when we must carefully marshal our re-

sources."

In the long-term, the tribes are planning to develop new sources of revenue - a Columbia Gorge casino, for instance - that eventually will replace revenue that has declined from timber, Jackson said.

Later this month, Fuentes, Jackson and other staff of the finance department, along with the heads of the enterprise operations, will present an initial budget proposal, including revenue forecasts, to the Tribal Council.

The finance staff will make a

budget recommendation, which the Tribal Council will review in early September. A proposal will be posted by Oct. 1, and following this posting, the process calls for district and general council meetings on the recommended budget.

After considering input from tribal members, the Tribal Council will make a final decision by Dec. 1, at which time the final budget must be posted.

The new budget year then begins Jan. 1.