

## Around the rez

### Tribes consider Chamber

Approximately 12 Warm Springs small business owners gathered at the Warm Springs Small Business Center to discuss a local Chamber of Commerce. Representatives from the Oregon Native American Chamber of Commerce (ONACC) in Portland, as part of their outreach program, met with tribal members.

The group discussed the benefits of a reservation Chamber of Commerce. Many participants believe an organized group would foster business relationships on and off the reservation. The necessary off-reservation networking could be implemented more effectively. A Warm Springs Chamber of Commerce also could provide programs on receiving tax credit and deductions, or effective ways to do business with people off the reservation. The group hoped big corporations, which specifically seek out minority businesses, would have a more coherent way to reach them. Outreach programs through mentors, information sharing, and internships and/or scholarships for youth would also be a focus.

Funds to support a Chamber of Commerce could be obtained in a variety of ways. Membership fees would provide some revenue. The tribes could receive money from federal and state agencies due to strong tribal relations. The idea of grant-oriented non-profit status was suggested.

Warm Springs has 130 small businesses. A directory is available at the Small Business Development Center. Another planning meeting for a Warm Springs Chamber of Commerce will be held at 11 a.m. on December 11 at the Family Resource Center.

All small business owners and other tribal members are encouraged to attend. The event is a potluck. For more information call 553-3592.

### BPA plan draws criticism

The treaty fishing tribes of the Columbia River basin are condemning plans by the Bonneville Power Administration to slash up to \$200 million from its fish and wildlife budget, according to an announcement by the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC).

The CRITFC announcement says the BPA plan is "profoundly irresponsible." Also, according to CRITFC, the BPA has not exhausted other financial options that would offset its losses.

"This reckless approach clearly represents disregard for the fish and wildlife project recommendations of the tribes and the Northwest Power Planning Council," said Donald Sampson, CRITFC executive director. "It's a reversal on what the agency promised."

The criticism came as BPA was planning to announce cuts between \$150 million and \$200 million in fish and wildlife spending over four years. "What this means is that Bonneville is pulling the rug out from under its long-stated promises to our tribes to fully fund fish and wildlife..." said Sampson.

## Opportunities grow for disabled

Tribal member serves as model for Madras foundation

By Shannon Keaveny  
Spilyay Tymoo

After being introduced as "handicapable" rather than handicapped, Nikiya Courtney, 21, of Warm Springs, took a deep breath and delivered a touching speech about his life as someone diagnosed with multiple disabilities.

The Opportunity Foundation of Central Oregon (OFCO) event took place Nov. 15 across the street from its future Jefferson County location, formerly the Ron McDonald car dealership in Madras.

OFCO is a tri-county private non-profit organization dedicated to providing employment, housing and recreation to people with disabilities. The Madras location will have a focus on employment for the mentally and physically disabled.

Courtney, who uses a wheelchair and describes his condition as closest to a slight case of cerebral palsy, was chosen to speak on behalf of OFCO because he represents possibilities, said Rebecca Smith, OFCO developer.

"Nikiya is a great example of possibilities not disabilities, which is our organization's motto. He's persevered despite the lack of services in Jefferson County," said Smith.

Courtney's speech detailed his life. He was born with "multiple disabilities" that doctors have not been able to specifically diagnose.



Shannon Keaveny/Spilyay

Nikiya Courtney speaks for the Opportunity Foundation

From the beginning, said Courtney, his mother treated him the same as his siblings. "My mother taught me to be my biggest advocate," Courtney said.

Part of Courtney's mother's lesson was "to always keep trying and not give up."

He became the first student with multiple disabilities to attend Madras High, and graduated with a 3.65 GPA. His high school efforts earned him a statewide award as one of two top students.

Courtney held a variety of jobs over the years. He worked as a Warm Springs police cadet, an IHS receptionist, and student technician for the Diabetes Program.

Today he resides in Bend and studies nutrition at Central Or-

egon Community College.

Courtney spoke to his audience about having disabilities: "I believe we have the right and ability to be successful and hold jobs. If we're given the chance, I guarantee we'll work twice as hard."

OFCO's presence in Madras will open up new possibilities to disabled Warm Springs residents.

The building is scheduled to open in the fall of 2004. A long-term goal is to provide a shuttle service from Warm Springs to Madras, Redmond and Bend to help tribal members with disabilities transport to their jobs.

At present, tribal members with disabilities often have to relocate to foster homes, away from their family and friends, if they want to work.

A shuttle service would mini-

mize foster care situations because relocation would not be necessary.

Courtney hopes the OFCO Madras location will bring more awareness to the reservation about the physical struggles people with disabilities face daily. As a sovereign nation, the reservation does not have to adhere to the regulations of the American Disabilities Act (ADA), explained Courtney.

"Sometimes it is very difficult to get into buildings. I would like to see buildings more (handicap) accessible," he said of Warm Springs.

OFCO owns a variety of businesses that employ people with disabilities through work programs. They also support employment on a one on one basis that helps participants find jobs in their community.

At the Madras site, OFCO intends to build a \$2 million mixed-use building that will integrate the community through businesses and housing.

The site cleanup and property purchase has been funded. Representatives from OFCO plan to acquire an additional \$4 million in grants to fund their project.

Says Courtney of OFCO's presence in Jefferson County, "I hope it motivates disabled people to move forward and not just waste away. I hope it motivates them to do things with their life. I know work motivated me."

After the OFCO event the crowd crossed the street and watched the initial demolition of the former Ron McDonald car dealership.

For more information about OFCO call 548-2611.

## Tribal committees outline goals for the coming year

(Editors note: this article continues one that appeared in the previous edition of the Spilyay. The last issue covered the Timber Committee.)

By Shannon Keaveny  
Spilyay Tymoo

Tribal government committee members gathered recently to discuss their goals for 2003.

The following account summarizes their discussion:

### Range and Ag Committee

The Range, Irrigation, and Agriculture Committee prioritized their goals for the next year as pursuing a feedlot and irrigation projects to bring in more revenue.

"We need to utilize our water for the people," said Carmella Scott, representative for the committee, of the possibilities for the mass quantities of water in the Deschutes River.

Scott informed attendees that at the ISC Symposium in Tucson, Ariz., a drought relief request was passed for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. In order to make it happen, she said, efforts need to be made at future meetings.

"We need a strong speaker,"

exclaimed Scott about taking action to receive drought relief. "If no one speaks up, nothing will happen."

The fencing on Highway 26 also needs to be replaced next year. Otherwise, she said, the southern reservation district has had some grazing troubles but the other two districts are in order.

Jacob Frank, also a representative for the Range, Irrigation and Agriculture Committee, talked of the search for funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The tribes recently received \$20,000 from the USDA to educate on and vaccinate for the Western Nile Virus. The funding was for livestock vaccination.

Frank explained his discovery that to receive drought money from the USDA, the Tribal Council must first declare the reservation in a drought. From there, a proposal can be made to Congress for drought relief funding.

The discussion unfolded into the possibilities of the tribes encouraging young people to farm again, so the reservation is less dependent on outside

sources. Raymond Captain Moody suggested it would be good to visit the high school to educate and encourage young farmers. Others wondered what happened to the 4H Club, where young men used to learn to care for cattle.

### Culture and Heritage

Chairwoman Emily Waheneka shared the activities of the Culture and Heritage Committee. Waheneka and Viola Kalama, also a Culture and Heritage representative, spent two days at the Burke Museum in Seattle sorting through and identifying artifacts from Miller Island, Mount Hood, the Deschutes River and other locations. Waheneka estimates they still have another two to three days of work left.

Once sorted, the Columbia River treaty tribes will decide the artifacts' fate.

Waheneka thought a burial was most likely.

The artifacts harbored a horrible smell, because of the seal-skin many were wrapped in. Waheneka said on Miller Island there used to be seals and their hides were used for burials.

Many of the items were bones, and both Kalama and Waheneka wore gloves while handling.

A prolonged disagreement since 1997 between the tribes, the Corps of Engineers, and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) was updated. The BPA, currently in possession of some ancient pictographs bulldozed from a canyon near Celilo Falls before it was inundated, intends to use the pictographs for the upcoming anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in the Horse Thief State Park, home of the famous pictograph *She Who Watches*.

Kalama expressed her concern of BPA's intentions for the pictographs.

"They want to make a big and fancy exhibit out of them. We don't want our ancient artwork to be a showpiece," she said.

A final meeting between the Culture and Heritage Committee and BPA about the pictograph rocks took place in Portland on Nov. 14-15.

Concern was expressed about the possibility of a tribal department website offering access to recorded voices of elders who are now passed away.

"We don't believe in advertising our elders," said Kalama.

### Education

About 1,100 Warm Springs kids attend local public schools, said Urbana Ross, representative of the Education Committee. Sixty students attend Indian boarding schools, most of which are in Salem.

Ninety students participate in higher education. The higher education budget has been exceeded by \$800,000 this year, as more tribal members display an interest in pursuing a higher education, said Ross.

Out of state tuition is high, she said. Meanwhile, there are ideas on how to reduce costs of higher education for the tribes.

Currently all students who qualify are granted higher education funds, which includes tuition and cost of living expenses.

A grade point average of 2.0, either a GED or high school diploma, is required to receive scholarship funding from the tribes. Students are allowed one Bachelor Degree and one Master Degree.

For Ph.D.s scholarships from other sources must be sought, said Ross.

She stressed the importance of tribal members applying for scholarships to help reduce costs to the tribes' trust fund.

Specifically, she encouraged applicants for a \$200 OIA scholarship. For information about the scholarship contact Floyd Calica or Shilo Shaw. Also, ITC and IEC funds are available.

Recently, a think tank took place in Oregon about creating an Indian college in the state.

### Fish and Wildlife

Donny Winishut, representing the Fish and Wildlife Committee, made a brief presentation. He said the 2002 ceremonial hunting was completed.

"It was successful aside from some problems with private landholders," he said of hunting issues tribal members face on ceded ground.

Winishut attended a meeting in Couer D'Alene, Idaho for the Native American Fish and Wildlife, where further solutions for land restoration and fish restoration were discussed. Fall chinook salmon numbers were close to the projected numbers, he said. About 30 fish are being tested for disease, he said.

## Budget: Officials hope to avoid lay-offs

(Continued from page 1)

As mentioned above, the Credit Enterprise is to pay \$1.5 million; and Composite Products, \$375,000.

Timber revenue is estimated at \$3.75 million. Interest will add another \$1.45 million, according to the budget resolution.

The 2003 budget that was approved last week is substantially similar to the proposed budget that was the topic of district and general Council meetings earlier this fall.

The added money for the

Seekseequa Fire Hall (see story on this page) is one notable change that was made from the time of the proposed budget to the time of the adoption.

Another change was the reduction by \$106,000 of the employee cost of living allowance. The earlier \$556,492 figure was reduced to \$450,492.

The budget item "other proposed program increases" was reduced from \$285,000 to \$225,000.

"We are continuing to gradually cut back tribal government,

and that means a cut in programs and services," said Charles Jackson, Secretary-Treasurer.

Under the 2003 budget, an estimated 20 job positions could be eliminated. "But Council has clearly stated that we should explore all other avenues before doing that," said Jackson.

Chief Operations Officer Willy Fuentes said, "My intention is to minimize layoffs to whatever extent possible. Laying people off is the last resort."

As part of the 2003 budget, High Lookee Lodge is receiv-

ing an appropriation of \$250,000. When High Lookee started operations, the Tribal Council reallocated \$500,000 from the tribes' Managed Care Program as initial start-up funding. The monies were expected to be more than adequate to subsidize start-up operations until monthly revenues equaled monthly operating costs. However, those funds have been spent along with another \$175,000, while High Lookee operating costs remain substantially higher than revenues.

## Fire hall: site is already selected

(Continued from page 1)

Councilwomen Carol Wewa and Brenda Scott, and Councilman Ron Suppah, also said the Seekseequa Fire Hall project needs to move forward.

The new fire hall would continue a long-range expansion of fire and ambulance protection on the reservation. The development of the Simnasho hall was an initial

phase of the expansion plan.

The proposed location of the Seekseequa Fire Hall is 11.5 acres at the top of the hill near the turn toward Indian Park.

Plans call for a hall that is 39 by 66 feet, equipped with drive-thru fire station bays, meeting room, kitchen, utility and bath.

Living quarters would be on an adjacent lot.