

UO to build new longhouse

Groundbreaking ceremony pays homage to a long overdue plan

By Shannon Keaveny
Spilyay Tymoo

Attendees cheered after representatives from the nine Oregon tribes pushed their shovels into the ground recently on the University of Oregon campus.

The celebration was a groundbreaking for a new longhouse that will accommodate growing Native American university enrollment.

Over 50 people attended the event.

Tribal Councilwoman Bernice Mitchell represented the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. University of Oregon President David Frohnmeyer stood nearby.

"I hope the new longhouse

on campus will reflect the growing energy of Native Americans on campus," said Frohnmeyer.

The longhouse is scheduled to be finished in the fall of 2004.

A long overdue plan, tribal efforts to build the Many Nations Longhouse on campus date back 20 years. Events held at the previous longhouse had participants eating in shifts due to space constraints.

Before the groundbreaking, Warm Springs tribal member Wilson Wewa sang an invocation with a representative from the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla.

The song, which was about the lifecycle of salmon, was intended to serve as a metaphor for the cycle of students and the importance of educating Native Americans.

Like fish, students leave for four years and then return to the tribe, explained the Umatilla tribal member.

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David Frohnmeyer

University of Oregon President

Afterwards, Bernice Mitchell expressed her gratitude to have economic provisions for a longhouse.

"Let's keep improving our schools in the same way we would upgrade from a Model T Ford to a Cadillac," Mitchell mused.

She spoke of the benefits of understanding other cultures while maintaining one's own.

"Keep going to school and get everything you can from it. Then come home or stay somewhere where you can teach other Indian children," Mitchell requested of the Native American students present.

"Because only you can teach

them," she added.

Mitchell included some tribal wisdom about education, saying it is first important to learn to say "I'm sorry" before a person can begin to learn other things.

Frohnmeyer was pleased to fulfill his longtime promise of a new campus longhouse for the tribes.

He made the promise nine years ago when he became president of the university.

He invited all attendees to the fall of 2004 dedication of the Many Nations Longhouse.

A final design for the longhouse was exhibited.

The architectural firm hired was Jones & Jones Architect and

Landscape Architects in Seattle. The longhouse will be located directly behind the University of Oregon Law School.

Afterwards there was a powwow on the MacCourt basketball court and a free salmon dinner in the late afternoon.

In the evening Native Americans graduating from the University of Oregon were honored.

Among the graduates honored were Warm Springs tribal member Kahseuss Jackson and Klamath tribal member Gordon Bettles. Jackson will receive an undergraduate degree in business.

Bettles, who has relations in Warm Springs, is the oldest Native American to graduate from the University of Oregon. He will receive his masters in the Independent Studies Indian Program in June.

There are over 250 Native American students that attend the University of Oregon.

Program offers youth work

Employees must be "on track" for high school graduation

By Shannon Keaveny
Spilyay Tymoo

There's summer work on the reservation for teenagers age 14 to 21.

One criterion to get hired is to complete 80 hours of volunteer time.

Another is to be "on track" for high school graduation.

Students must provide school transcripts and have a note from their school counselor.

"Volunteering promotes the concept of giving back to the community," says Verleen Kalama, administrator for the Youth Development Program.

The requirement to volunteer supports positive youth development that enhances citizenship skills, civic bonding, character building, additional knowledge, personal development and social and civil responsibility, says a handout produced by WFDD.

WFDD hopes, in return, the community will benefit because the younger generation will add to their life experiences, build their resume, and participate in the community in a positive way.

This year employees of the Summer Youth Program will earn \$6 per hour. Jobs will last eight weeks.

All first year working youth will be required to attend a youth orientation, set for June 11 and 12.

Once volunteer time is completed, Warm Springs youth may apply for one of two programs.

The tribal program, funded by the tribes, requires applicants be an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

Applicants must pass a pre-employment drug test.

The Workforce Investment Act, funded by federal monies, serves native youth ages 14 to 21.

Applicants must be considered low-income and provide an income eligibility form with a recent check stub or proof of income.

Some examples to prove eligibility are food stamps verification, SSI, and GA/Welfare benefits.

Applicants must also pass a pre-employment drug test.

Paid employment opportunities vary from a Fire & Safety cadet to an office aide to a dental assistant.

Volunteer hours can be fulfilled at the Museum at Warm Springs, High Lookee Lodge, the Rodeo Association, and other locations on the reservation.

For more information or to apply, please contact Verleen Kalama or Darlene Trimble, YDP assistant at 2101 Wasco Street, or call at (541) 553-3324.

Committees update Council

The following is continuation of committee updates to Tribal Council that took place in the beginning of May.

Spilyay Tymoo published the updates of Culture and Heritage Committee, Off Reservation Fish and Wildlife Committee, and Education Committee in the last issue.

On Reservation Fish and Wildlife Committee

A three-year eel study on the reservation is in its second year.

The project - the first of its kind on the reservation - is a collaboration between Bonneville Power Administration and the Confederated Tribes.

Tributaries of the Deschutes River are being monitored. T

The goal is to identify what types of eels exist in the Deschutes River sub-basin and their abundance levels.

The most common eel in the Deschutes River sub-basin is Pacific Lamprey.

Bucks are down, reported Leslie Bill from the On Reservation Fish and Wildlife

Committee.

There are 29 fawns for every 100 does. There are 11 bulls to every 100 cows.

"The elk are thriving pretty good," said Bill.

The reservation will be offering a hunter safety course for 12 to 17 year olds.

Hunters who hunt on off-reservation lands, such as ceded or tribal lands, need to carry proof that they have completed a hunter safety course.

On the reservation, it is still optional.

The Fish and Wildlife Committee has been following the progress of the navigability of the John Day River.

The state has set up a pilot project with private landowners and people who use the land for recreation purposes.

The tribes have not taken an official position on whether or not the river should be navigable.

Navigability is a legal standard that goes back to the origin of statehood, which says the state owns the beds and banks of rivers that have been categorized navigable.

Because the Treaty of

Hunters who hunt on off-reservation lands, such as ceded or tribal lands, need to carry proof that they have completed a hunter safety course. On the reservation, it is still optional.

1855 precedes statehood, John Day River navigability should not affect the tribes use of their ceded lands.

In addition, the land deed for Pine Creek Ranch, a ranch owned by the tribes in the John Day Basin, does not extend into the middle of the river.

For this reason, the Tribes will not lose private property if the river is deemed navigable.

At the fish hatchery, the handling of wild chinook salmon will stop after the steelhead run is over. Steelheads often carry dis-

ease that put the salmon at risk.

Agriculture, Range, and Agriculture Committee

The committee plans on having a meeting with the 33 Warm Springs departments to resolve Ordinance 33.

Ordinance 33 establishes community boundary fences for the purpose of keeping livestock out of community areas.

The committee feels the ordinance has been ineffective on the reservation. The issue is keeping the fencing maintained. Livestock often filter into residential areas.

Currently, there are subdivision-zoning plans but Tribal Council has not officially approved a zoning map.

Tribal Councilperson Ron Suppah asked the committee to see if there were any additional monies for zoning fencing.

There is a growing problem with wild dogs and other predators, which affect other wild game populations and ranchers livestock.

Sheep have taken a particularly hard hit, said the committee.

Wasco-Warm Springs man succeeds with local business

Peaceful childhood memories of horses draw him back to the reservation.

By Shannon Keaveny
Spilyay Tymoo

When Elke Little Leaf Kirk left the reservation he was five years old.

He moved with his father to Portland where he attended elementary school. There, he was the only Native American.

A tough childhood began with after school fights with African Americans, Caucasians, and Hispanics.

"I experienced a lot of racism," said Kirk.

By middle school and high school, he was running with the wrong crowd.

"I got involved with gangs and drugs," explained Kirk.

Through it all, he remembered his early childhood on the reservation.

"Some of my earliest memories were of horses," said Kirk.



Elke Little Leaf Kirk started a contractor business in Warm Springs about one and a half years ago.

Eventually Kirk got away from the drugs and gangs and went back to riding horses.

Six years later, with pending

enrollment with the tribe, Kirk runs his own contracting business.

The business, which he started about a year and half ago, is

doing well, he says.

Little Leaf Contractors primarily does roofing, home restoration, and yard debris removal. Kirk mostly receives his contracts through the housing department and credit department.

"I always wanted to do my own thing," said Kirk.

Kirk learned his job skills as a framer, roofer, and by installing insulation and air conditioners in the Portland area.

He got his first job on the reservation through Rudy Clements in housing.

"He's the first person who gave me a job. I just kept bothering him. He finally gave me a job and gave me a chance to prove myself," said Kirk.

After replacing the roof for the Small Business Center, Kirk plans on donating his time and putting in a new carpet for the enterprise.

"I use the computers and office at the Small Business Center and feel this is a good time to give something back to them," said Kirk.

Little Leaf Contractors also plans on donating two roof jobs each year to the housing depart-

ment.

"I feel the tribes need the help," said Kirk of his donation.

Kirk always wanted to come back to the reservation, be enrolled in the tribe, and be a part of the community.

"I just set my goals," he explains.

In the future he plans to have a training business for recovering addicts. Kirk would teach participants the construction skills he knows. He hopes to be a role model to other people who have had similar experiences with drugs and alcohol.

"I feel like I would be a good example because I come from the same place," said Kirk, referring to his past struggles with drugs and alcohol.

"I hope others will stay away from drugs and alcohol because it will hold you back. It clouds your thoughts and your visions," he said.

"Now I can see clearly what my goals are and feel like nothing will stop me."

To contact Little Leaf Contractors, call Elke Kirk at (541) 815-5448.

Story idea?

Call

Spilyay Tymoo

553-3274