

Artist sees challenges, opportunities

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

Tribal artists face many challenges, and unique opportunities in marketing their work. One person with great insight into these challenges and opportunities is artist and art advocate Roxanne Chinook.



Submitted photo

Roxanne Chinook at her office at Northwest Indian College.

For the past two years Chinook has worked as the director of the art marketing program at Northwest Indian College. The college is in Bellingham, Wash. Chinook has been working there for the past two years. "In order for Native American artists to persevere in today's economy," she said, "it is imperative that we learn to compete at a much more aggressive level." Tribal casinos, she says, provide a unique opportunity for Native artists to make their work known to the buying public. "I am ecstatic that Kah-Nee-Ta now has a gallery to feature tribal members' artwork," Chinook said of the resort's new art gallery. The Museum at Warm Springs, she said, is an excellent venue to display tribal member artwork. "But a museum's role," she said, "is primarily to preserve and exhibit artwork, and to educate the public." The casino is a better place to display tribal artwork for potential sales, she said. "And we create a greater recognition of the continuity of Native American art," said Chinook, "and how the appropriation of these art forms impacts the survival of our culture." For decades, she said, Native

American art, cultural and spiritual symbols, artifacts and crafts have been appropriated by the Western world market economy. "And they are way ahead of us in marketing," said Chinook. Developing ways for tribal members to sell their art is a main goal for Chinook, as director of the Northwest Indian College art marketing program. In addition to advocating for display of Native art at tribal casinos, she advocates for tribes to hire tribal member artists as consultants during the casino design process, building and remodeling. Toward this goal she began an advocacy campaign in 2002, while living in Warm Springs. She sent e-mails, letters and articles to tribal leaders, newspapers, casino management, architectural firms and native com-

munities nationwide. Her effort gained recognition: she was an invited guest on the Native American Calling talk radio show in April of 2002; and Indian Gaming magazine published an article on Chinook in May of that year. She was an invited guest panelist at the Burke Museum in Seattle earlier this year. The topic was the "Indian-ness" of Indian Art. **New marketing strategy** Through her job, Chinook oversees an internet website, www.ebuynativeart.com, an electronic brochure of Native American art. The site receives over 100,000 hits per month. Chinook was one of the original artists recruited into the Northwest Indian College art marketing program.

Shortly after joining, she realized that the program needed to change in order to continue helping tribal artists and craftspeople toward self-sufficiency. Originally, the college developed the program to help Native artists by providing them with a venue to sell their work on-line, and generate enough sales to sustain the art marketing program. However, after she researched similar Native American and on-line galleries, art marketing resources and forums, she found that products under \$50, such as prints, posters and craft items are what generate sales. Art directors, buyers and collectors are more interested in the old fashion way of viewing and buying high-end art, but will visit on-line galleries to gain information about artists. So she revised the art marketing program grant to reflect the necessary change. The program's primary focus, she said, will always be to provide assistance to Pacific Northwest Native American artists. The assistance is through promotion, education and preservation of traditional and contemporary fine art, crafts and culture. The process of education has to start at home, said Chinook. By this she means that Native American communities first must honor their tribal artists by buying only authentic native art, and by offering venues to sell their art. Toward this goals, she said, a special thanks goes to Kah-Nee-Ta High Desert Resort and Casino, and the Warm Springs Community.

Young poet receives national recognition

Walsey Ike-Thomas will travel to Orlando, Fla., to attend a national poetry award conference, Aug. 28-Sept. 1. Ike-Thomas, who will be a senior at Madras High School, has been busy lately raising money for the trip. He's held car washes with his friends, and has more events planned for this week.



Walsey James Ike-Thomas

On Friday, Aug. 8, he will host a fundraiser from 11 a.m. till 3 p.m. at Elmer Quinn Park. People contributing receive a large slice of pizza and drink; hamburger and hotdog with chips and drink. Contributions of \$3 are requested. On Saturday, Aug. 9, he will host a fundraiser behind the Community Wellness Center. Food items include stew and fry bread, plus a bake sale. There will be a variety of pies, cakes and cupcakes. Contributions of \$5 are requested. This fundraiser will be from 11 a.m. until the items for sale are gone. Ike-Thomas has many interests besides poetry. These include writing music, weaving baskets, and computer science. He is drug and alcohol free. Ike-Thomas is a good role model for his younger sisters, said his mother Lovie Ike. Walsey has pre-enlisted in the Marine Corps and will be leaving soon after graduation next year. He said that his role models in life are his uncle Ty and

his mom. "Tyrone always encourages me by spending lots of quality time, like taking me to the movies, on trips, shopping and doing chores. He's my other dad," said Walsey. Of his mother Lovie Ike, Walsey said, "Because my mom's a cop, she always keeps us in check. I appreciate everything she has done. There are no words that can express everything she's done for my sisters and me." He said he would like to thank Natalie Kirk for teaching him how to weave baskets. He also wished to thank all his friends who have helped with the car wash fundraiser. These include Clinton Tohet, Delmer Davis, Truman Merrifield, Curtis Satanaus, Wynona Tohet and Felicity VanPelt. Any assistance toward making the trip to Orlando happen would be greatly appreciated, said Ike-Thomas. The home phone is 553-1242.

Land purchase to help restore fish above dams

Streams supported chinook, sockeye
By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

Salmon runs once existed in rivers and streams above the Pelton-Round Butte hydroelectric facilities on the Deschutes River. Bringing the fish back to their historic habitat is a goal of the Confederated Tribes, as co-owner with Portland General Electric (PGE) of Pelton-Round Butte. One key aspect of restoring the fish runs is passage above and below the dams, which for now form impassable barriers to migrating fish. Another critical aspect of restoration is ensuring that fish habitat still exists above the dams. The tribes and PGE currently are working on how to establish fish passage past the dams. Meanwhile, the Deschutes Basin Land Trust announced good news recently in regard to fish habitat upstream from the dams. The land trust, based in Bend, has purchased 1,240 forested acres near Camp Sherman. The land is on Lake Creek, a primary tributary of the Deschutes River. The creek contains some of the most impor-

tant fish and wildlife habitat in the region. The purchase will greatly help in the effort to restore the salmon above Pelton-Round Butte, said Robert Brunoe, general manager of Warm Springs Natural Resources. Brunoe is an advisor and former board member of the Deschutes Basin Land Trust. He's visited the property several times. "This is a great purchase," Brunoe said of the new Lake Creek preserve. Brad Chalfant, executive director of the land trust, said, "With this project the land trust really has come of age. Our success on the Metolius will propel us forward with projects on the Crooked and Deschutes Rivers." The land trust, based in Bend, works with landowners and communities in the region toward protecting privately-owned land that is important to fish and wildlife. **Chinook, sockeye runs** Spring chinook once spawned in the many forks of Lake Creek on the preserve property. Sockeye salmon - one of only two historic runs in the



Courtesy of the land trust

These photos show the preserve property and Lake Creek.

state - swam through the property to their spawning gravels above Suttle Lake. The preserve is located within

a highly diverse forest supporting a variety of wildlife, including a large herd of elk. The forest is a stopping place for song-

The preserve is the historic spawning ground for one species, while another passes through the preserve to spawn farther upstream...

birds migrating between Canada and South and Central America. The Deschutes Basin Land Trust obtained an option to purchase the 1,240 acres from Willamette Industries, shortly before Willamette was acquired by Weyerhaeuser. The trust completed the purchase with Weyerhaeuser, after an ambitious campaign to raise the funds to buy, restore and manage the forest land. The acquisition is part of the land trust's campaign called "Back to Home Waters," an effort to restore salmon and steelhead to the upper Deschutes River Basin. "Relicensing the Pelton-Round Butte hydroelectric project near Warm Springs, which includes a plan for getting anadromous fish through the dams, creates an historic opportunity to bring salmon and steelhead trout back to the upper Deschutes Basin," said Chalfant.

"That effort will succeed only if the fish have some place to spawn. The preserve is the historic spawning ground for one species, while the other passes through the preserve to spawn farther upstream. You don't get many opportunities in life like this." Now that the land trust owns the property, Chalfant said that the most immediate challenge is to balance the public's desire for access against the need to begin providing stewardship. "We now need to convert roads to trails, restore disturbed areas, reduce the risk of wildfires and improve wildlife habitat," he said. The land trust was founded in 1995. The trust acquires land or development rights to help conserve and protect the Deschutes Basin's natural heritage and scenic vistas. Since its founding, the trust has protected over 5,500 acres in the Deschutes Basin. Through its "Back to Home Waters" campaign, the trust seeks to facilitate the successful reintroduction of salmon and steelhead trout to the upper Deschutes Basin. This would be the first time in four decades years that the fish would be present above the dams.

Native American artifacts featured in Lewis and Clark exhibit

GOLDENDALE, Washington — President Thomas Jefferson's primary objective in sending Meriwether Lewis, William Clark and the Corps of Discovery to explore for a river route to the Pacific in 1803 was to sow the seeds for trade and commerce in the Northwest. Through Nov. 15, Maryhill Museum will spotlight that aspect of their epoch adventure in a new intimate exhibit titled Lewis and Clark At Maryhill. Curated by noted authors

Mary Schlick and Rex Ziak, the exhibit features original Native American artifacts comparable to those Lewis and Clark collected and documented while in the Columbia River Gorge, along with quotes from the Corps of Discovery journals describing such objects - objects that Native Americans had been using for generations to produce merchandise for trade. "Maryhill's vast collection of Native American objects made it possible for us to pull together

a wonderful exhibit illustrating the fullness of Native American culture at the time the Corps traded with tribes in the region," said Schlick. "Everything from horn bowls and spoons to fish hooks and baskets made just for cooking." On April 19, 1806, William Clark wrote in his journal, "There was great joy with the natives last night in consequence of the arrival of the salmon." The Maryhill exhibit brings quotes such as this to life by dis-

playing related artifacts like deer bone fish hooks, a fish gig, and fishing lines made of silk grass. In October of 1805, and again on April 22, 1806, the Corps walked across much of the 6,000 acres the museum now holds. "This stretch of the Columbia River served as the Wall Street of the Northwest," said Rex Ziak. "A site of great seasonal gatherings, a place where anything could be traded." Many of the objects in the

museum's Native American exhibitions were gifted to it by the Mary Underwood Lane family. Lane was related to Chief Welawa (Chenoweth) of the Cascade Tribe. Her grandmother, Sally Wachichus attended the famous council held by Lewis and Clark at the Cascades of the Columbia during the Corps' stay in the Gorge. The association of these family heirlooms with Sally Wachichus indicates that some of

them are of the same era, style and materials as those documented and collected by the Corps of Discovery. Maryhill Museum, a castle-like mansion overlooking the Columbia River, is located just west of U.S. 97 on Washington's Scenic Route 14. The museum is open daily, including holidays, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is a cafe, museum store, gardens and picnic area. General admission is \$7.