

# A look back at tribal news of 2003

(The following is a month-by-month account of some of the news events that occurred on the reservation during the past year.)

## January

Because of the December fire that destroyed the Warm Springs Elementary School gymnasium, school officials announced that construction of a new elementary school may happen sooner than once thought.

Plans for the new elementary school have been delayed due to budget restrictions. But the district could receive over \$1.2 million from fire insurance. This could go toward building the new school. In other news:

It was a rare if not unique scene. Tribal leaders singing traditional songs in a Deschutes County courtroom.

The ceremony concluded the court hearing, which itself marked a conclusion to more than 20 years of government negotiation. The court proceeding was in regard to the Confederated Tribes water rights agreement, finalized and made binding by the judge upon other water-right holders in the basin. Elsewhere:

Kah-Nee-Ta High Desert Resort and Casino was pleased to announce the creation of an art exhibition gallery space. And this:

Warm Springs Elementary School principal Dawn Smith was recommended for the National Distinguished Principal Award.

Meanwhile, tribal leaders were paying close attention to a Jefferson County Commission suggestion that a public utility district acquire ownership of part of the Pelton-Round Butte hydro-electric facilities.

"We are definitely going to watch this closely, and we'll be very interested in seeing how they might acquire the asset," said Jim Manion, general manager of Warm Springs Power Enterprises. And finally in January:

Tilda Walsey, 22, was named Miss Warm Springs 2003. The pageant was held at the Agency Longhouse.

This sad news happened in 2003:

He was a family man and a hero. That is how people who knew Derek Flowers remembered him.

"He gave his life trying to save his daughter," said Alvis Smith Jr., who worked with Derek at Warm Springs Construction. "He was a hero."

Mr. Flowers and his 3-year-old daughter Tanmya passed away Jan. 31. That day they were on a fishing trip along the Deschutes, when a tragic accident claimed their lives.

## February

Fresh in the ring, newly elected Gov. Kulongoski pledged support to the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI). Kulongoski made the pledge during a speech at the ATNI winter conference, held in Portland.

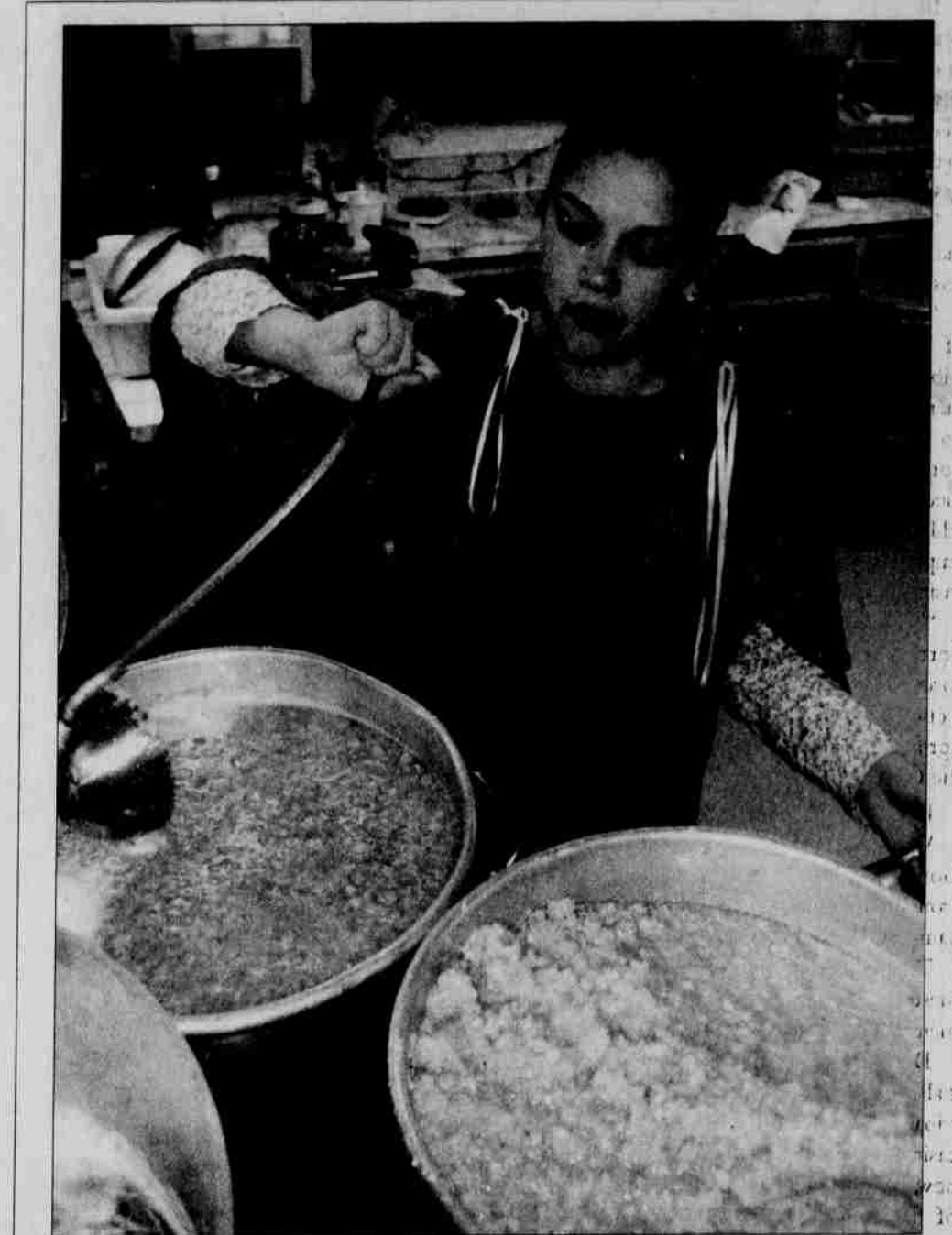
His speech largely centered on tribes' rights as sovereign nations, and his comments earned him a standing ovation. "The tribes do have special rights. They are sovereign nations," said Kulongoski.

"I deeply care about undoing well-documented and forced concessions on tribes," he added. In other news:

Northwest Indian tribes called for a full audit of the Bonneville Power Administration's fish and wildlife program. The tribes also demanded that the BPA honor its financial commitment to salmon recovery. These actions also came during the ATNI winter conference.

Elsewhere: Warm Springs Elementary School has made great progress at increasing attendance, but the same is not true of tribal member student attendance at Jefferson County Middle School, school officials announced.

"Students miss school for different reasons, but in too many cases I think some kids just don't want to come to school," said Butch David, middle school community liaison for Warm Springs. Warm Springs students have an average daily attendance rate of about 86 percent, said middle school principal Steve Johnson.



Early in 2003 Brittany Ruby stirs roots in preparation of the Root Feast at Simnasho.

Warm Springs Power Enterprises was studying the possibility of developing wind power generation facilities.

In February, wind test towers were set up at various locations on the reservation. The Island near Simnasho was one of the test sites.

## March

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was making plans for a \$10.5 million redevelopment of Celilo Village. The village, located near The Dalles Dam, is home to between 50 and 100 people. The residents mainly are members of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Yakama

Nation, and the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla.

Celilo Village was developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1940s and '50s. The original residents were people living in the area that was inundated by construction of The Dalles Dam. Also in the news during March:

The man convicted of the 1987 murder of tribal member Margaret Lorraine Still and her friend Gabriel S. Ramos was sentenced recently to 15 years to life in prison for the crimes. Daniel H. Castillo, 34, had earlier confessed to the murders, which happened on a ranch in Sutter County, Calif. The sentencing of Castillo brought a sense of closure to the case for family and friends of Ms. Castillo, said Warm Springs Fire and Safety Chief Dan Martinez, who is Ms. Still's brother.

**Thank You For Your Support In 2003**

*May Peace light your pathway and  
happiness guide your Spirit throughout  
this Sacred Season and the coming  
New Year.*

**Happy Holidays from  
The Museum At Warm Springs**



In gaming news: The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde made a proposal to develop a casino in the city of Portland. This proposal is of obvious interest to members of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, who are planning to develop a casino at the Columbia River Gorge, less than an hour from Portland.

Tribal Council Chairman Olney Patt Jr. said the following in regard to the Grand Ronde proposal to develop a casino in Portland:

"It is a policy of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs not to comment on other tribes' efforts to provide economic development and to become economically self-secure. So we are avoiding public criticism, and support other tribes in their economic efforts to meet the needs of their tribal members." Patt added, though, that an important point must be emphasized in regard to the recent Grand Ronde casino proposal.

"The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Portland casino proposal," said Patt, "will end forever any practical, philosophical or legal objection to the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs moving forward to locate our casino at the Gorge."

In other gaming news:

What should the new casino at the Columbia Gorge look like? What should the landscaping around the casino look like? What should be the name of the new casino?

Tribal members no doubt have opinions on these issues, and they are being asked to share their views.

During the coming weeks, tribal gaming officials and the casino architects will be talking with tribal members about the design of the Gorge casino. A central question in the design process is how, and to what extent, the culture and history of the Confederated Tribes will be reflected in the casino architecture and landscape.

## April

In response to the Gorge casino questions asked in March, many tribal members expressed the following:

"A casino at the Columbia Gorge would provide the Confederated Tribes with much more than just a new source of much-needed revenue. Instead, the new casino also is an opportunity for the tribes to celebrate the Indian culture, and to show some of the history of the tribes."

The casino would not only be a profitable business venture, but also a project of educational, historical and artistic importance.

"The salmon and river culture is a main expression the people want to see in the design of the facility," said gaming official Rudy Clements, who has been meeting with tribal members about the design of the Gorge casino.

"They want to be able to hear the rushing water, to see the salmon, the falls and rapids, the scaffolds and fishermen, the poles and nets," said Clements. "They want to see the role of the women in taking care of the fish, how the women dressed, how the fish were cared for, and the spiritual significance that goes along with the river and salmon culture." In other news:

There would be no new school bus purchases next year, and no new textbooks. Summer school programs would be cut, and the district may adopt a "pay to play" school sports program.

These are some of the cost-cutting ideas being considered by the Jefferson County School District 509-J board, during the 2003-04 budget process. Elsewhere:

Tribal Councilman Olney Patt Jr. decided to take the job of executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC).

Paul Young was named the Bureau of Indian Affairs Warm Springs Agency superintendent. Young and his wife moved to Warm Springs just this month. He met with Tribal Council, and spent an afternoon getting to know many of the 48 BIA employees who work on the Warm Springs Reservation.

The Warm Springs Agency was two years without a permanent BIA superintendent. The Warm Springs BIA Agency includes both the Warm Springs and the Burns Paiute reservations.

After disappearing for several years the Root Feast Rodeo has been making a strong comeback on the rodeo circuit. "This was one of the best rodeos we've seen in Warm Springs," said Delford Johnson, president of the Warm Springs Rodeo Association. The association sponsored the Root Feast Rodeo the last weekend of the month. "We had close to 200 contestants, and some of the finest contestants in the world," said Johnson.

## May

Tribal Councilman Olney Patt Jr. decided to take the job of executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC).

Patt has served as Tribal Council chairman. He served in that position for five years. In other news:

It was an honor not only for the individual, Dawn Smith, but also for the tribes as a whole. The award said a lot about Smith, but also about the Warm Springs Elementary School teachers and staff, the students and parents. Smith, principal of the school, recently was named the National Distinguished Principal for the state of Oregon. In other news:

The lives of four local youths were featured in a new documentary, called *Growing Up Native*. The youths featured in the 60-minute documentary are Ashley Aguilar, Jerrod Kalama, Armina Moody and Lydell Suppah.

Meanwhile, a federal judge has invalidated a decision by the National Marine Fisheries Service on how to restore and protect salmon in the Columbia River basin. This was a victory for those who want improved management of fisheries in the basin. And this:

Workers at the Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery are busy, as spring chinook salmon are migrating upstream. Elsewhere:

This summer fish technician Joel Santos and biologist Jennifer Graham are busy collecting information about eels in over 47 locations in the Deschutes River sub-basin.

The effort is part of a three-year collaboration between the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Bonneville Power Administration to assess what types of eels exist in the Deschutes River sub-basin, their distribution and abundance levels.

The project is being funded by the BPA. The study is the first of its kind on the reservation.

## June

The Museum at Warm Springs celebrated its Tenth Year Anniversary, with a Horse Parade followed by a Veterans ceremony, and formal recognition of everyone who has helped in the development of the museum.

A census core group, consisting of a representative from most departments on the reservation, met in Warm Springs to discuss plans for a tribal census. The first step will be a challenge to the most recent U.S. census. In other news:

A U.S. Department of Agriculture grant for \$695,832 will help transport the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs into the digital age of telecommunications. The grant will enable the tribes to bring broadband telecommunications access onto the reservation. And this:

Warm Springs tribal member Aurolyn Swyer-Watlamat and her business partner Natalie Charley, of the Quinalt Tribe, developed a new business venture.

They plan to market the software services of Cort Directions, a Bend-based company recently purchased by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Swyer-Watlamat and Charley, through their company Red Sky, are planning to market the Cort Directions services in Indian Country.

In other news: Work began on a road project that will replace the Shitike Creek overflow bridge, which is structurally unsound. Road crews will be at work into August. The \$532,000 project is be-

ing funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Pi-Ume-Sha each year honors veterans. The first Pi-Ume-Sha Powwow happened in 1969, at the height of the Vietnam War. This year the powwow again honored all veterans, with special tribute to the tribal women and men who were in the recent Iraq War.

## July

Warm Springs fire fighters were kept very busy during the Fourth of July, the time of year when human caused fires are at their highest. There were a total of 33 fires on the reservation on July the Fourth. Elsewhere:

The Warm Springs Tribal Council splashed a bit of cold Deschutes River water on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Oregon State Parks last week. The action was meant as a wake-up call to state and federal agencies unwilling to implement a mandated permit system for recreational boaters on this scenic central Oregon waterway. In other news:

Earl Squiemphe joined the Tribal Council. He filled a Simnasho District Council seat that came open in June. Squiemphe was the first runner-up in the 2001 election. In sporting news:

Owens Mares was named 2003 Native American All American East Defensive Player of the Year at the East vs. West national football game in Lawrence, Kansas. He received a trophy similar to the award he won in 2002, as this is his second year playing in the national all-star game for the east. Elsewhere:

The four treaty fishing tribes of the Columbia River this month held their first commercial gillnet fishery for summer chinook salmon since 1965. The basin has seen the second-largest summer chinook run in 43 years, according to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

The Columbia River Compact, representing the states of Oregon and Washington, and fishers from the Warm Springs, Yakama, Umatilla and Nez Perce tribes, opened the commercial gillnet fishery for summer chinook July 14-16.

(Review of the rest of 2003 will be in the next edition of the Spilay Tymo.)

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