

Happy New
Year!

Spilyay Tymoo

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Snowstorm blankets the reservation

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The snowstorms that hit the region this past week have been a source of considerable disruption in many ways. Road conditions have been treacherous. Schools were closed down. Work days for tribal employees were cancelled, delayed and cut short.

Most tragically for families, there have been three deaths on the reservation since the storm began (see story at right).

Also, two men working in the woods clearing roads – Leland Thompson Sr. and Chesley Yahtin Jr. – were stuck in their rigs for two nights and days.

They went out to the woods on Saturday, and were not found until Monday.

On Monday both men were transported to Mountain View Hospital for medical treatment.

They were reported to be doing okay, considering the extremely cold temperatures they had endured.

They were expected to go home on Tuesday.

The first snowstorm hit the region just after the holidays. There was a quarter of an inch that fell just before New Years, but the real snow began on Friday, Jan. 2, when seven inches fell. Then another six inches fell on Sunday and into Monday.

More snow was falling Tuesday, the deadline day for this edition of the newspaper. The weather was expected to warm up on Thursday of this week.

The snow has been of the light and powdery variety, good to look at, especially when it's falling, and good for children to play in.

But the snow has been deep, making driving difficult or impossible in areas off the main roads.

Reports indicate that the recent snowstorms have dropped more snow than any similar event in the region during the past 30 years.

(See page 5 for information on the roads.)

Three die during the storm

Three local men have died during the past several days. One of the men, Gale Lawrence Jr., 41, was killed in a motor vehicle accident.

The father of Mr. Lawrence, Gale Lawrence Sr., passed away shortly after learning of his son's death. Mr. Lawrence Sr. was 62 years old.

On January 3, Sidney Greene, age 17, was found deceased outside in a residential area of Greeley Heights.

Mr. Greene had last been seen at 1:15 a.m., Jan. 1, leaving a local residence. The cause of his death is to be determined by autopsy.

The case is under investigation by the Warm Springs Police.

The motor vehicle accident that took the life of Gale Lawrence Jr. happened early in the morning of Tuesday, Dec. 30, at the intersection of Highway 26 near Hollywood Boulevard.

Mr. Lawrence was the single passenger in his vehicle, traveling east on the highway toward his job at the mill.

Slippery and icy road conditions are believed to have caused Mr. Lawrence to lose control of his vehicle, which rear-ended an 18-wheel Freightliner. The driver and passenger in the Freightliner were uninjured.

Mr. Lawrence was transported by ambulance to Mountain View Hospital, where he was pronounced deceased.

Gale Lawrence Sr. passed away later on the same day, shortly after learning of the death of his son. The motor vehicle accident that took Gale Lawrence Jr. was one of two fatal wrecks that happened on the highway during the closing days of 2003.

On Sunday morning, Dec. 28, two Portland women – a mother and daughter – were killed in a wreck on Highway 26.

They were traveling south toward Bend when they collided with a north-bound vehicle. The women, Victoria Geans-Gail, 51, and passenger Katharine Jean-Gail, 25, were pronounced dead at the scene. The driver of the other vehicle suffered minor injuries.

Resort notes changes in employment

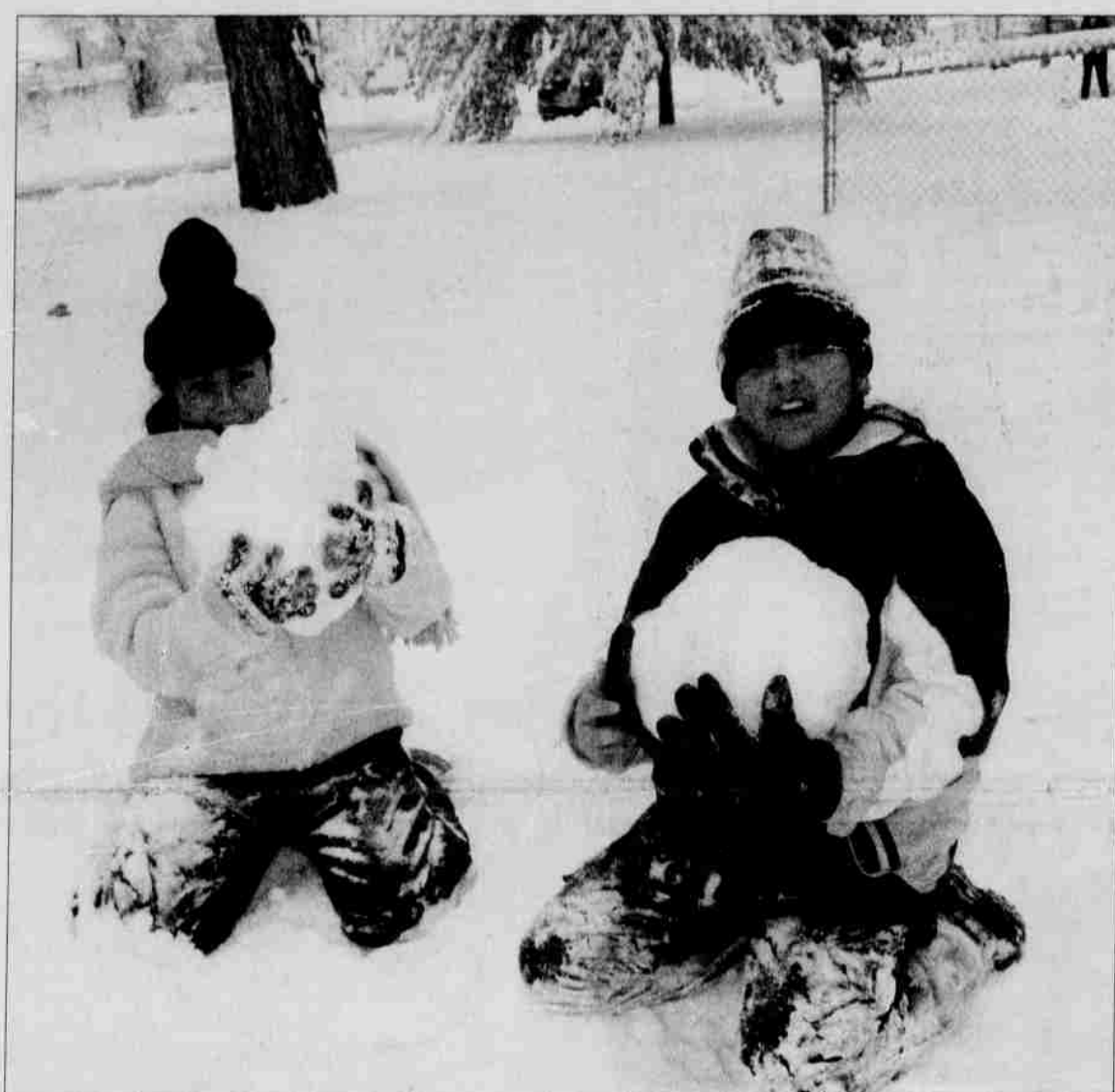
The Kah-Nee-Ta board of directors is trying to increase tribal member employment at the popular resort and casino. A number of steps have been taken to achieve their goal, including a year-end incentive based on the length of time an employee has been with the enterprise.

Statistics show that since 2001, when the first incentive was paid, the number of tribal members employed at the resort has increased by 14 percent. The number of employees listed as married into the tribe has increased by 2.4 percent, while "other Indians" has decreased by 14 percent. The number of all other employees has dropped by four percent.

These percentages indicate a shift in employment to tribal members. The Kah-Nee-Ta board is hoping tribal members continue taking advantage of resort job opportunities and consider a career in the hospitality business.

The board has created the Kah-Nee-Ta Tribal Member Development program, which recently hired a tribal member survey team. The team is currently conducting a survey regarding employment in the hospitality and casino fields. When the survey has been completed and analyzed, Kah-Nee-Ta will initiate a new program for the hiring and retention of tribal members.

Some areas of concern for the development program include the need for employees to have reliable transportation, deal with work schedules that often include weekends and holidays, locate childcare, and deal with potential conflicts between work and traditional family time. Tribal members wishing to obtain a job through Kah-Nee-Ta will have to face these and other issues related to the hospitality business, but the survey team will be working to help alleviate potential problems.



Dave McMechan photos



Triston Boise sleds near the community center.

The many inches of snow that fell on the reservation during the holidays were at times a nightmare for drivers. But the winter weather was also very much welcome by young people. All around Warm Springs you could see the kids enjoying the unusually large volume of snow that covered the reservation. Above, Malory Smith and TaSheena George prepare to build a snowman.



Icicles several feet in length formed at the WEDD building.

Top news stories of 2003

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The year 2003 ended and the new year began under a thick layer of snow – the most snow the region has seen in several decades. The weather provided a dramatic end to reservation news of 2003.

But there were many other newsworthy events that happened locally over the past 12 months. For instance, Warm Springs Elementary School Principal Dawn Smith was recognized nationally as a Distinguished Principal.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced plans for a \$10.5 million redevelopment of Celilo Village. And the BIA appointed Paul Young to the position of superintendent of its Warm Springs Agency.

On a hunt in the fall of 2003, tribal member Joel Santos killed a bighorn

sheep. In the summer of 2003 Highway 26 south of Warm Springs received some much-needed improvements, through a \$532,000 project funded by the state transportation department.

At the beginning of each new year the *Spilyay Tymoo* rates the top news events of the previous year. The following are the top five selections for 2003.

Top story

The Confederated Tribes in 2003 made great progress in the areas of radio and telecommunications.

The tribes received nearly \$1 million in grant funding for improvements to radio station KWSO, and for development of a telecommunications community center plus broadband internet access on the reservation.

Telecommunications

In 2003 the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded the tribes a grant of nearly \$700,000. The funding will enable the tribes to bring broadband telecommunications access onto the reservation via a microwave link at Madras.

Once the broadband signal reaches the reservation it will be distributed via fiber optic cable to key tribal agencies. Broadband Internet access will also be made available to tribal residents and businesses via a fiber optics cable or through a fixed, point to multi-point, wireless system.

A key element of the project is the creation of a telecommunications community center, housing 24 desktop computer stations connected to high speed Internet.

For this effort in 2003 the Confed-

erated Tribes received top honor, the Excellence in Telecommunications Award, presented at the Eighth Annual Rural Telecommunications Conference in Bend.

Radio station

During 2003, KWSO 91.9 FM took a big step forward into the world of modern technology. The radio station applied for and was awarded a \$163,000 grant through the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Confederated Tribes will also contribute \$54,000.

The funding – \$217,000 in all – will improve the sound of the Station on the Reservation, as KWSO plans to replace its antiquated analog equipment with state-of-the-art digital components.

Taken together, this improvement plus the advancement in telecommu-

nication are the top story of the year, as the longterm benefits to the tribes will be many.

Second

Toward the end of 2003 The Oregonian published a series of page-one articles that detailed the deaths of children and teenagers of the reservation.

This news coverage by The Oregonian was one of, if not the most talked about events of 2003 on the reservation.

Some people felt the articles were very helpful in that they will focus more attention on the issue of youth health and safety on the reservation. Others felt that some of the articles in the series were insensitive to the families of young people who have passed away.

Please see TOP NEWS on page 5