

Gathering: more meetings planned

(Continued from page 1)
 "Regarding the welfare and protection of the children, accountability and results are needed," he said.

"Those tribal, state and federal programs that provide welfare and protection for our children need to be held accountable, and we need to see positive results."

Brunoe commented that it is time to hold the adults responsible for minors under their supervision.

"Finally, it will be community-driven action that will make positive changes. None of these stand alone or are more important than the other, but combined they will change the current situation our children find themselves living in," Brunoe said.

Carol Wewa, tribal councilwoman from the Seekseequa District, was at the head table with the chairman.

Wewa said her concern was that the articles were true. She said, "I thought, How do I deal with it with my boys? I didn't like the fact that our dirty laundry got aired throughout the nation." Wewa stated that a lot of action has been taken, "Now we need to work on the follow through."

Many people who spoke were emotional and mentioned previous contact with various tribal programs that resulted in less than satisfactory results. A number of people commented on the need for a halfway house for those in alcohol and drug abuse treatment. Some questioned what business it was of the Oregonian's.

Others wondered why the Oregonian was allowed access to tribal information.

There were comments on the lack of sensitivity by the Oregonian reporters, not asking for permission to print names of the

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Radine Johnson

deceased and taking pictures at a funeral. Others said it was a wake up call.

One lady in attendance asked, "What happened to our laws? This is a dry reservation. You can see people drunk at any time of the day." She went on to say, "Nothing is ever done to our wrongdoers."
 She summarized her thoughts

by saying that she thought that the people had gotten too modern and were living too fast. She said, "Our religion is breaking down. Our whole way of life has to be revamped."

Radine Johnson, a mother and a tribal employee who works in the language program, said that the youth have little to do in Warm Springs.

"We have a 4-H Culture Camp, a little rodeo, but we have to drive 45 miles to go to a movie."

She commented that the tribal languages have been taken out of the schools. "Our kids don't identify with their own culture. They want to be somebody else."

Johnson also mentioned that since the gymnasium at the Warm Springs Elementary School had burned down more than a year ago, the children were holding PE classes in the school cafeteria, while at the same time, Madras High School built a new entrance way to their school.

Johnson said, "I don't want to see more money put into the same programs that have already failed. I want to see a swimming pool built here, spend money on a new gym, spend money where the children will benefit."

Another community member said, "We have no services, no jobs, no housing. What is going to happen to us?"

He said, "Whether we're Paiutes, Wascos, or Warm Springs, we are all one. We are the same people, until someone breaks us down into groups."

He directed his attention to Tribal Council, commenting, "Tribal Council should be here for us, not traveling on the outside. Start opening up to our people. Reach out to them." The speaker then looked at Chairman Brunoe and said, "I know you have, but reach out more."

Tribal Councilman Earl Squiemphen spoke to the membership, saying that some of the kids lack respect for their elders.

"When we were kids we were taught to respect and listen to anyone older than us. The kids today are not raised the way we were. When you try to talk to a young person today, you might get called a four letter word."

Squiemphen told the group that the Secretary Treasurer and the Chief Operations Officer are working on changes that will make our children safer.

Wilson Wewa Jr., a senior citizen program employee, said that it all boils down to accountability.

He said tribal leaders need to be accountable, as do parents.

"What we do to eliminate this issue will impact the youth, and therefore we should listen to their thoughts."

Council Chairman Brunoe

Wewa said, "The tribes can censor the Spilyay Tymoo. If these stories had been in our tribal newspaper it wouldn't have been a shock when it came out in the Oregonian."

Throughout the evening, an array of people discussed their views and expressed their concerns.

A number of those in attendance privately said they appreciated the chairman calling the meeting and taking the heat from the membership.

A suggestion was made that the next meeting be held at the Agency Longhouse where mi-

crophones would be available and the space would provide for a larger audience.

Chairman Brunoe said he was working with Carol Wewa to put together a Chairman's Round Table with the youth.

"I want to hear what their concerns and recommendations are," Brunoe said.

"What we do to eliminate this issue will impact the youth, and therefore we should listen to their thoughts."

The Chairman said a date has not been set but it will be sometime in February.

Brunoe plans to continue holding monthly Round Table meetings.

Education is the scheduled subject for February, and public safety is on the agenda for March.

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