

# Spilyay Tymoo

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## Large gathering on issue of chieftainship

There was a large turnout of people at the Agency Longhouse last Saturday. There were memorials in the morning, and then a lunch.

A meeting regarding the future of the Wasco Chieftainship had been scheduled for the afternoon, but the meeting was cancelled. Chief Nelson Wallulatum had to attend a service for a friend at Grand Ronde. Whether the chieftainship meeting will be re-scheduled is not yet determined.

At the gathering on Saturday, Chief Wallulatum made available to the people information on the history – both ancient and more recent history – pertaining to the issue of the chieftainship.

One of the documents available was in regard to the ethnology of the Wasco people, from the time when the tribe lived at the Columbia.

Chief Wallulatum also had copies of the part of the Confederated Tribes' Constitution that has to do with the succession of a new chief, and the apportionment of the three districts of the reservation. The Constitution says, "the chiefs shall serve for life, and their successors shall be selected in accordance with tribal custom."

Chief Wallulatum also had available copies of the minutes of a meeting held in 1988 regarding the succession of the Wasco Chieftainship. At the meeting tribal members stated the qualities that they wished to see in the person who succeeds to the chieftainship.

## Campaign to increase reservation phone service

(AP) – Qwest Communications has launched a campaign to raise awareness of its low-cost telephone service for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs after the Federal Communications Commission found many tribal areas were underserved.

The program provides access to basic local telephone service at rates as low as \$1 per month.

Yvonne Iverson, community health manager for the Warm Springs Tribal Community Health Program, said she expects the public service campaign will help about 2,500 residents who do not have phones.

"A lot of them live in remote areas that are not close to the clinic or don't have a neighbor where they can go next door and get help," Iverson said.

"I really worry about the people who live in Simnasho and Seeksequa, the rural areas about 15 or 20 miles or more from the clinic, if they have no phone or transportation," she said.

Iverson said she did not know how many Warm Springs residents have taken advantage of the program. She started helping them get access in January 2002 but it took her about four months to work through problems getting people enrolled. Now she gets fewer complaints about Qwest service from residents trying to enroll in the program.

"A lot of people were denied at first," Iverson said. "They were told they didn't live on a reservation because the computer was not set up to recognize us. It took a lot of work on Qwest's part."

If you are interested in learning more about this program, contact Qwest 1-800-244-1111. Also, program applications are available at IHS.



This year Mallory Aurel Smith (at back), Anessia Marie Sam and Revonne Johnson (right) are candidates of the Pi-Ume-Sha Court. (For their statements see page 7). Other candidates this year are Keshena Stevens and Roshanda Clements-Poitra (Junior Court), and Winona Tohet, Ada Polk and Kaylynn Wolfe (Senior Court).

## Clinic director retires

By Dave McMechan  
Spilyay Tymoo

Russ Alger is retiring this week as director of the Warm Springs Indian Health Services clinic. Alger has been with IHS in Warm Springs for the past 21 years. During that time, health care on the reservation has seen great improvement.

Construction of the Health and Wellness Center ten years ago, for example, was a big step forward. And the wellness center continues to improve in many ways, from hiring the best-qualified staff, to the use of the latest health care technology.

Alger has helped in bringing about many of these changes. And he has made many friends along the way. His last day on the job is May 28.

Alger grew up in Fall Creek, and graduated high school from Oak Ridge. These are rural towns in the central Willamette Valley near Springfield and Eugene. After high school he joined the Navy, and was on active duty for two years. He then went to college at Oregon State,

where he got his pharmacy degree.

His first job with an Indian tribe was in the state of Washington, with the Quinalt Nation. There he worked as chief pharmacist and director of lab and x-ray. Alger worked at Quinalt from 1975 until 1983, when he took the job of chief pharmacist at the Warm Springs IHS clinic.

Alger was the Warm Springs clinic chief pharmacist for eight years, and then in 1991 he became the Warm Springs IHS clinic director, or chief executive officer, as the job is called today.

He became clinic director at the time when the tribes and IHS were planning to build the new clinic. At the time the clinic was housed in the building that is now the Family Resource Center. The tribes' health care needs had clearly outgrown this facility, which was built in 1935.

The new clinic was constructed in 1993. This was the biggest change that Alger has seen in the health care program on the reservation over the past two decades.

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## School liaisons help students adjust

By D. "Bing" Bingham  
Spilyay Tymoo

The situation is improving for Native kids going to school in Madras. The 509-J School District tribal liaisons agree that it's not perfect, but it's getting better.

Butch David works at the middle school. He feels one of the toughest times young tribal members face is when they transfer from Warm Springs Elementary to the middle school. For many children it's the first time they've been off the reservation outside of family trips.

"A lot of kids come in here after the 5th grade and they're nervous. They really don't know what to expect from school. It has to be scary," he says. "It's up to us to make them feel welcome so they want to be here. Just because it's in Madras doesn't mean it's not their school."

On the first day children are met on the busses and told what needs to be done. After that, regular trips to classrooms and responding to questions helps the child adjust.

Part of the middle school's scary reputation comes from the past.

"When I first started here [the middle school] looked like a prison, the steel walls, hardly any windows. That was my personal experience," says David. "So how many parents think the same thing?"

David recommends to Warm Springs parents: "Come in and see for yourself. We're always trying to get the best teachers that we possibly can. We're trying to make teachers more culturally oriented. There are a lot of new teachers interested in Warm Springs."

Geographic and cultural isolation create problems for reservation youth. During their young lives they are not exposed to large numbers of white and Latino peers. This puts them slightly behind in understanding how the world works off the reservation. The native kids cultural integration skills are not the same as the Madras kids who've been dealing with other cultures all their young lives.

According to David, the young tribal members tend to hang out with each other until they figure out the other kids aren't so bad.

"I don't see it as a problem," he says. "It takes some kids longer [to adapt] than others, but it's one thing we have to overcome."

For David, the big problem is the lack of updated parental contact information. Some parents move or change their phone numbers and don't change

their contact information at the school.

"In case of an emergency, we need to contact somebody," he says. "We [might] know where they live, but if it was a critical emergency we wouldn't be able to get there for 20 minutes. We need to be able to find updated information."

He goes on, "We call home and they don't live there anymore and the phone number has been changed to an unlisted number. I understand – we're attendance people and nobody wants to hear from us because we're like the bill collector."

It's understandable, but it doesn't help the child much in an emergency. This year Native American attendance at the middle school is hovering near the 90 percent mark – up from previous years. The school district is stretching to accommodate young Indians.

"We've put up our tribal flag in the commons which is the first time since the building has been up," David says. "We've painted murals on the wall and more [Native American] things are going up elsewhere."

No matter what culture a child is from, the middle school years are a tough time. Boys are finding out about girls and girls are finding out about boys.

Hormones are in full flow one day and practically shut off the next. In between the kids are trying to figure out where their boundaries are going to be.

"Do [the kids] want to walk the bad side of the fence or the good side?" asked David. "In middle school [they're] on both sides of the fence. One day you're on the good side, the next the bad. That's just life."

To the parents on the reservation, he says, "Just support us and we'll support you."

So the native kids are learning in the middle school, the test scores are going up, attendance is up and the administration is looking for ways to be more inclusive.

Lana Leonard is the junior tribal liaison. She divides her time between the middle school and the high school. She admits the job is tougher than she thought it would be.

Parental involvement is the big issue she sees facing young tribal members. She feels they need more encouragement.

"It doesn't matter if it's their parents, bigger brother or sister, grandma, grandpa, any kind of involvement," she says.

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## Quaid joins 509-J school district board

Julie Quaid has joined the Jefferson County 509-J School District Board of Directors. Quaid works for the Warm Springs Education Branch.

She was appointed to the school district board earlier this month, after former board member Wayne Marshall resigned.

Quaid ran for the school board earlier this year, but missed it by just six votes. As the next runner-up, she was appointed by the board to fill the vacancy when it came open.

There are now two tribal members on the school board: Quaid and Jeff Sanders, giving the tribes good representation on the five-member board.

Quaid said that while both she and Sanders are tribal members, they will not necessarily agree on all issues that come before the school board.

"I became interested in serving



Julie Quaid

on the board because I see that the district and the tribes need to work together at really providing a good qual-

ity education for our kids in Warm Springs, and all the kids in the district," said Quaid.

"I have a good understanding of what it takes to deliver a good education in a rural community."

Quaid has served on the school district budget committee and the school Diversity Council. She's worked on the teen parenting program advisory board, and the school district and Warm Springs Elementary School site councils. She also served on the school facilities planning committee at the time when the construction work at the high school was in the planning stages.

She also has kids of her own who have gone through the 509-J district schools.

### Search for new superintendent

The school district board meets the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:30 p.m. The meeting room

is at the district support services building.

One issue coming before the board early in the summer will be the school district budget for 2004-05.

The budget committee has developed a recommendation that the board will consider in June.

Another important upcoming item on the district agenda is the hiring of a new superintendent, as Phil Riley has announced his retirement. The assistant superintendent Keith Johnson has a one-year agreement to serve as the interim superintendent.

The board has advertised the superintendent job once before. A screening committee looked at 14 applications, and recommended five to the board. Two applicants dropped out and the board was not comfortable hiring from the pool of the remaining three.

So the plan is to re-advertise the job, and then look again in the fall.