



Irene Towe gathers berries at the recent outing at Mount Hood.

Berries: hope is to improve fields

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They discussed the need for proper forest management practices that will increase the yield and health of huckleberry fields.

The berry bushes grow best in warm sunny areas of elevation between 4,000 and 5,000 feet, with reduced competition from other foliage on the forest floor. In past times fires would clean the forest floor, but current management practices discourage burning. This has caused huckleberry areas to become overgrown with other foliage,

discouraging berry growth.

The group that visited the ski area first went to Hood River Meadows wetland, the largest wetland area on Mount Hood. The small number of berries disappointed tribal members. Resource managers say that controlled burning of the brush in the fall, just before the winter snows, would dramatically improve this huckleberry habitat.

The tribal members were happier with the huckleberries in the Umbrella Falls area, where the brush has been

better controlled. Baskets were filled with berries in this area.

Tribal members who attended the event requested maps of the picking areas, and said they appreciated Mount Hood Meadows for the effort to protect the traditional berry gathering areas of the tribes. As plans develop to improve the fields, the cooperative planning efforts of the ski area, the tribes and the forest service will be necessary, a commitment that Louie Pitt and the managers of the ski area and forest agreed to.

Nutrition: students join in classroom teaching

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Visual teaching aids are important for the children to learn in this class.

When it came to teaching the kids about the value of nutrients in efficiently digested food, Breese had a fortunate occurrence at home: her cat killed a gopher and left everything but the head.

"We lost the esophagus, but we had the rest of the digestive tract for demonstrations," she says. "We put that in alcohol so the children could take a magnifying glass and see what we're looking at. It was fun."

The connections are important.

Breese teaches the kids that everything is related. The seed is planted, then harvested. After that the food is prepared, consumed and, with exercise, efficiently digested. Even the waste is utilized.

"There are all kinds of waste," Breese teaches the kids. "They got so they just laughed about all the different kinds of waste."

Carrot and celery peelings are an important part of the food cycle, says Breese. "I took the peelings home to our compost pile and brought back worms in the soil so the kids could see how the worms were working. I had them in an enclosed jar. The kids dropped a nice fresh piece of celery leaf on top and by the time our three-hour class period was over the celery leaf was disappearing. It was just amazing to the kids how these kinds of processes work."

Breese wrote the curriculum and lesson plan for these classes, but teaching has always been a team effort. Part of the teaching has been to continually ask questions of the kids about nutrition to set the information in their minds.

According to Breese, Minnie Tulalakus would do the food pyramid portion, and she'd ask, "We've eaten our meal, where do our portions fit into this food pyramid?"

At the beginning, last January, she would need to answer all of her own questions. None of the students would

"By the end of school we had kids up in front of the class helping us team teach. It was exciting."

Lynne Breese

OSU Extension family and community development coordinator

volunteer. As the year moved on, the instructor was hard pressed to pick among the youngsters waving their hands with the answer.

"By the end of school we had kids up in front of the class helping us team teach. It was exciting," says Breese.

This coming school year, this Extension program will be picking up a new class of fourth graders. "Our focus will always be on nutrition, but a large part of that will be food safety," says Breese. "For example: 'How do you prepare a sack lunch that's a safe sack lunch?' People on the whole don't think a lot about this."

And what's going to happen to last year's fourth graders who will be rolling over into the fifth grade? "We're going to be expecting them to do more about teaching this year," says Breese. "We want to start building some leadership skills into this."

She continues, "Some of them, with a little extra work, might be involved in teaching the new students the how-to part of the lessons. We'd like to work some of them into a stronger teaching role."

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Indians sought for roles in miniseries

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - A Hollywood casting director will take auditions in South Dakota this week for American Indians to be part of a cable miniseries.

Cable network TNT and Dream Works Productions are putting together a series called "Into the West," which will tell of the westward expansion in the United States.

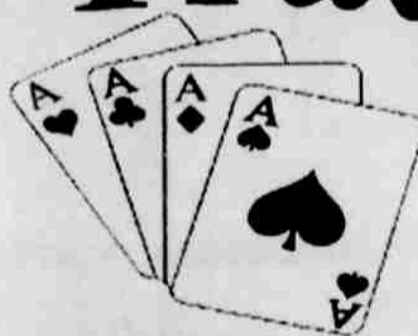
Chris Hull, manager of the state film office, said most of the work will be as extras. The directors are looking for Indians in different age groups and those who can speak the native language, Hull said.

Interviews with the casting director will be held Tuesday in Rapid City and Thursday in Sioux Falls.

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