

Election Day Celebration sees big turnout

By Brian Mortensen
Spilyay Tymoo

For Muriel Suppah of Warm Springs, health issues and constitutional rights were her focus when she dropped off her ballot on Election Day, Nov. 2.

James Arthur and Brian Renfro were happy to vote, hoping to see a new president voted into office.

A total of 524 of Warm Springs' 824 voters turned in their ballots at the Warm Springs Election Day Celebration.

The celebration was held at the Family Resource Center. While many were casting their ballots, another 13 people registered to vote in future elections.

The result was the culmination of a month-long effort by the Get Out the Native Vote Committee. The goal was not only to encourage tribal members to bring in filled-in ballot sheets, but to teach the importance of taking part in the American political process.

Depending on which part of the day voters came to drop off their ballots, they were treated to breakfast, lunch, or dinner, and received a free T-shirt declaring their participation on Election Day.

Warm Springs artist Marty "Moose" Tanewasha designed the T-shirts, featuring the word "Vote" in a bold red-and-black design. Door prizes were given out during the day.

Before the six-member voter registration committee began their efforts, there were 519 registered voters among tribal members living on the reservation, committee member Arlita



Willy Quinn pores over his ballot sheet in the quiet room, where local residents who had not yet marked their ballots could do so, at the Warm Springs Election Day Party at the Family Resource Center.

Rhoan said.

Trying to get more people to vote took a personal touch, including visiting tribal members in even the more remote parts of the reservation, and in some cases explaining the process of voter registration and voting in the Ichiskkiin (Warm Springs tribal) language.

"There were about six women who were busy contacting people about registering, either by phone or visiting," Rhoan said. "If they got interested in registering, then we went out and visited them and assisted them with the ballot."

"It was a lot of talk, a lot of explanation, a lot of reasoning with the yes-and-no (questions of the state and county ballot measures), explaining to make sure that they would understand how they were going to vote."

"We had a community gath-

ering at the Social Hall at the Community Center, and we had (tribal Governmental Affairs director) Louie Pitt there to explain some of the issues and who the candidates were," committee member Doris Miller said. "We had something at Kah-Nee-Tah (the previous week) for Kah-Nee-Tah employees."

Miller, said her own lack of familiarity with national issues in the past helped her in helping others to become involved.

"We tried to help people understand what the issues were, who the candidates were," she said. "Personally, I voted maybe only a couple of times in my lifetime on the national issues, and I didn't understand what I was voting for, so I took that into consideration. And so I thought, 'OK, if I didn't know that, then certainly there's people out there that don't know.'"

While voters who had completed their mail-in ballots to turn in Election Day could do so, ones who had not could vote in a "quiet room" at the Family Resource Center. Voters who felt insecure about any of the issues received an explanation from the tribes' lobbyist Michael Mason, who was on hand for the day to assist the new voters.

If they had not received their ballots in time for Election Day, they were transported to Madras to pick up ballots, Miller said.

"The point was just to make it as easy as possible for people," she said.

Renfro said he registered to vote literally when someone passed him by on the road.

"There was some lady and a dude were cruising all over, and I was walking down the road, and they stopped me and handed me a registration form," he said. He said he hadn't thought much about the broad array of state ballot issues on the Oregon ballot, but "the only issue is that I don't want Bush in there."

Arthur, who was standing outside the Family Resource Center with Renfro, said his hope was that, "Bush doesn't rob the election again." He said he registered to vote through his aunt, Lauraina Hintsala, a member of the voter registration drive committee as well as Chief Operations Officer of the Warm Springs Tribes, on his birthday, Oct. 4. Renfro and Arthur said they had voted for Kerry, as did Suppah, who had recently re-registered to vote. They weren't alone.

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Calendar

Jefferson County Basketball Organization will be conducting tryouts on Nov. 13 at Madras High School from noon to 2 p.m. The basketball organization is also looking for volunteer coaches for these teams. The teams practice 2-3 times per week in the evening, and play games for seven weeks, on Sundays through the winter. For information contact Evan Brown at 475-7265, ext. 326 (w) or 475-4515 (h).

Central Oregon Community College will be offering a comprehensive financial aid workshop at Madras High School from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 23rd. These workshops for students and their families will cover all the information needed to apply for federal financial aid, including the FAFSA form. For information, contact Michael Coe at 383-7256.

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Get an early start
for the
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25 years ago this week

From the Nov. 20, 1979
edition of Spilyay Tymoo

In the Nov. 15 referendum election, tribal voters okayed a \$5.6 million housing package and approved membership status for 15 of 23 adoption candidates.

The tally on the housing project was 339 yes and 158 no. Elsewhere:

The Tribal Council authorized the payment of \$3.5 million in 1979 bonus dividends to enrolled tribal members. Each enrollee is to receive \$1,500, which will be paid in two installments of \$500 in mid December, and \$1,000 in January. And this news:

Engineering and design of the turbine and powerhouse for the tribe's hydroelectric project at the Pelton re-regulating dam is proceeding on schedule.

"We are paying particular attention to the design of the fish-

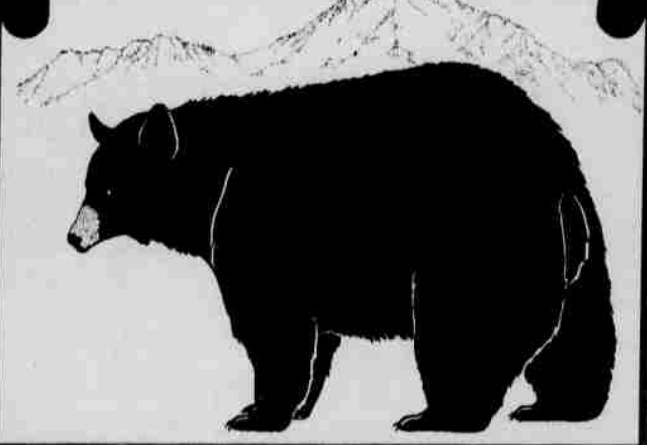
ways and intake structure so flow into the turbine will be to specifications," said Jerry Dibble, engineering consultant. In other news:

Traditional prayer opened a month of intensive training for staff of the tribal alcohol and drug program, temporarily closing the treatment residence to new clients.

Prosanna Williams prayed for strength for the 30 staff members at the first training session Nov. 1. By the end of the 20 workdays the confidence and academic foundation of the mostly Indian staff should be greatly improved, said program director Steve Bekofsky. And this:

A traditional Thanksgiving dinner was prepared by the Simnasho students for their guests from the second grade of Madras Elementary.

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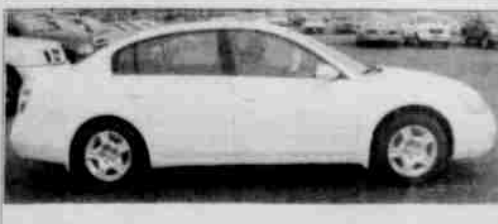
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