

Spilyay Tymoo

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New youth center opens April 1

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

April 1 is the date set for the opening of the new Warm Springs youth center. The center is a project of the group Extraordinary Young People, which has developed a similar center on the Crow Reservation in Montana.

Matt Burton, chief executive officer of Extraordinary Young People, said he hopes to see results in Warm Springs similar to those seen on the Crow Reservation. "They report a 50-percent decrease in youth crime," said Burton.

The new center will be housed in the building on Hollywood Boulevard that is used as the meeting hall of the Veterans of Foreign Wars-Ladies Auxiliary. Over the past few months, Extraordinary Young People district manager Jerry Jacoban has made extensive changes to the building, remodeling and renovating the structure. The outside still looks the same but the inside is completely different.

For instance, the building is going to include a retail shop, called the Rez Hip Hop and Hoop Shop. Young people can earn Nike bucks to buy basketball shoes, sweatshirts, hats and other Nike apparel. In time the center will include some kind of restaurant, said Burton. The center will have games for young people such as pool and foos-ball.

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B&G Club is doing fine

By Brian Mortensen
Spilyay Tymoo

In its second incarnation, the Boys and Girls Club of Warm Springs is faring well, thank you.

The club hosts around 50 children each day during the school week, mostly from Warm Springs Elementary School, though the club is open for children ages 6 to 18.

Since the club was reformed last May in a building just west of the school on Warm Springs Street, everyone, including director June Smith, is still new.

"There was an existing club at the Community Center, and that got shut down, and then last May, we were hired on as staff," Smith said. "So we're all new staff."

The club has a five-person staff, including Smith.

Carol Miller is the membership service coordinator. She helps Smith in bringing information out to the local community about what the club's doing, and makes sure the kids are checked in each time they come.

"She's kind of the centralized point every day for kids and parents," Smith said.

Indeed, Miller is the first person a visitor sees when he or she walks into the Boys and Girls Club's modular building.

Miller and Allee Jackson, who will soon be the club's arts coordinator, have both been on staff since last May, as well.

Kosie Wolfe, who started in January, is the club's Sports, Fitness and Recreation Director.

Leo Gonzalez is split half-and-half between the club in Warm Springs and the one in Madras.

"He helps us out, and his official title is Health and Life Skills Coordinator," Smith said. "He implements all of the prevention programs for the kids."

Soon, the club will also have a coordinator for the TRAIL program.

See **CLUB** on page 7

Plan for charter school taking shape

By Brian Mortensen
Spilyay Tymoo

Seeing a charter school as the key to an "elite education" for students from Warm Springs, the tribes' Education Committee this week affirmed its plans to move ahead in its efforts to start such a school.

During the committee meeting Monday evening at High Lookee Lodge, the charter school was one of four areas of emphasis. Four members of the five-member Education Committee were present, along with six others who attended.

"We were asked by the school district to consider calling it the alternative school," Education Committee chairwoman Marie Calica

said. "And I didn't quite agree with that because an alternative school really has just 'at-risk' students. We have students, too, who want to go to a different school, who want to learn more about their traditional ways and culture."

Calica described the charter school as "a public school of choice," a school selected by parents and children.

Charter schools are independently run public schools, created for the purpose of molding their own curricula or programs. An example is the new Nixyaawii School in Mission, on the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Covering middle and high school students, Nixyaawii incorporates Native language and specialized curricula that conform to Native custom.

However, as Nixyaawii is a charter school, it is also a public school, governed by a local school district, like 509-J. Though such a school would be located in Warm Springs with perhaps a Native-oriented curriculum, it would have to be open to non-Native students as well.

"A charter school would have to be open to all students," Calica said. "So the other thing we'd have to do to get money from the district is provide a lottery for the number of applications, because it might exceed its capacity."

Whatever the capacity the building for such a school might be, having as few as 10 non-Native students out of a total enrollment of 100 would entitle it to funding through 509-J, she said.

A possible problem looming ahead, though, is an anticipated slashing of Impact Aid monies.

Impact Aid provides financial support to school districts affected by federal activities, including Indian reservations and military bases, which include lands that would otherwise be taxable.

"This is something we're lobbying for, to not cut down the national Indian education," Calica said.

"The Impact Aid is \$1,500, maybe plus, per student that goes to the Jefferson County school district, and if they cut it down, the district is going to be very low on money for the charter school."

See **CHARTER SCHOOL** on 12

Problem of meth harms whole community

By Brian Mortensen
Spilyay Tymoo

Whose problem is methamphetamine anyway?

The answer, it would seem, is almost everyone in a community, as the drug has become a scourge to Western states over the past couple decades for its addictive qualities, low price relative to other drugs, and the swath of crime that follows meth use in a community. The problem was the subject of the day-long "Methamphetamine: Whose Problem Is It? Part II" seminar at Living Hope Christian Center in Madras Feb. 28.

Several hundred people attended the eight-hour seminar, sponsored by BestCare Treatment Services, that included panel discussions with law enforcement officials, community activists, business owners helping law enforcement, drug treatment counselors, and those who have personally experienced "meth's" destructive power and fight every day to break free from it.

Local filmmaker Duke White showed a 20-minute trailer for his recently completed movie on methamphetamine use, "Downfall," completely filmed in Madras, his hometown, and featuring members of the local law enforcement community.

Among the 18 members of various panels who both spoke and answered audience questions during



Leona Ike, of Warm Springs Parole and Probation, left, addresses the conference while Sonya Littledeer-Evans listens.

the day was Leona Ike, supervisor of the Warm Springs Parole and Probation Department since 1993.

Ike said she has experienced the dangerous swath created by methamphetamine use on the reservation, both in the Warm Springs community and in her own family.

She said the Warm Springs Jail is consistently overcrowded because of methamphetamine use.

"A high percentage of our inmates are serving jail time for methamphetamine use," she said. "The majority of them are drug-related cases."

Youth, particularly children of meth users, are affected, she said, in that about 50 percent of drug tests her department administers trigger referrals toward investigation by tribal children protective services concerning child neglect.

"Tribal probation this year has also began drug testing for Child Protective Services, and approximately 50 percent of those tests have come back positive for methamphetamine and marijuana," she said.

She said methamphetamine's effect is manifested in the great number of

children now living with their grandparents, who are forced to provide such items as diapers and assume the day-to-day responsibilities the children's parents can no longer handle, such as day-care.

Theft, always an unwanted by-product of methamphetamine use within a community, has reached the point on the reservation that tribal regalia, sacred items criminals always left alone, are being stolen and sold at pawn shops, she said, to buy more meth.

The largest problem she said is a lack of available counselors to help meth users who have been caught.

"About 80 percent of our clients have minimal contact with their assigned counselors in mental health," she said. "That's due to lack of adequate available staff when our people are reporting in to Community Counseling."

"Treatment is sometimes not an option, or an immediate option for our clients. They have a long waiting list, and the estimated period of time is three to six months, and with methamphetamine users, it's really critical that you get them into treatment, and if you don't, it's basically a lost cause, and you can expect them to be in your judicial system for a long time."

See **METH** on page 9

The Treaty of 1855

Letter from Billy Chinook describes plight of tribes

(The following is an article in a series regarding the Treaty of 1855. This June the Treaty will be 150 years old.)

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The best way to describe the state of the tribes in 1855 is through the words of an Indian who was there at the time. In November of 1853 William Chinuch, known also as Billy Chinook, wrote a brief but urgent letter to an official of the federal government. His letter reads as follows:

Dear Sir:
We are tormented almost every day by the white people who desire to settle on our land and although we have built houses and opened gardens they wish in spite of us to take possession of the very spots we occupy. We remonstrate and tell them that this is our land, they reply that the Government gives them the right to settle

in any part of Oregon Territory and they desire to take land in this very spot.

How we wish to know whether this is the land of the white man or the Indian. If it is our land, the white must not trouble us. If it is the land of the white man, when did he buy it?

Now we as Indians have no power to defend our rights against the whites; will you inform us how we are to do that.

Our country here is very broken and much of it rocky, but little suitable for farming; we have many horses and many of us have begun to plow and sow and more will soon begin; but if the white man comes he must have lands for a large farm; soon all the good land will be taken. Where will we go - where will we make our homes? If we lose our country what shall we do? I know that the whites are strong, they have ammunition and guns and power; we cannot resist them; but we ask them to leave us our homes for we are poor and have no power. Be so kind as to answer us and tell us what you think.

Signed, William Chinuch.

I have seen hard times - have been from the Dalles to the states with Col. Fremont.

P.S. If it is in your power, have the kindness to send two or more plows for the use of the tribe, as we have no means of working the ground, our only plow being broken. If you have the power to give us the plows and some hoes, it will help us much, if not 'tis all right, we would like to have wrought iron plows as cast iron is easily broken. Yours with humble respect.

The letter is dated Nov. 3, 1853, and Chinuch wrote it from "Wasco Dalles of the Columbia."

In an 1853 report, Joel Palmer, BIA superintendent, said the government must act soon to avoid total catastrophe for the Indians. "A home remote from the settlements must be selected for them. There they must be guarded from the pestiferous influence of degraded white men, and restrained by proper laws from violence and wrong

among themselves. Let comfortable houses be erected for them, seeds and proper implements furnished, and instruction and encouragement given them in the cultivation of the soil."

In his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Palmer comments on the need for the government to move forward and sign the treaties that had been negotiated with Indian tribes of Oregon.

"I would call the attention of the department to the fact that a general restlessness and dissatisfaction exists among these tribes with whom treaties were negotiated on account of their non-ratification. They have become distrustful of all promises made them by the U.S., and believe the design of the government is to defer doing anything for them till they have wasted away."

Such was the year 1853, two years before the U.S. government and the Wasco and Warm Springs tribes would have their treaty signed.