

# Hoops, hip-hop and more at Spechtrum

By Brian Mortensen  
Spilyay Tymoo

The youth of Warm Springs now have a whole "Spechtrum" of activities just for them. The Spechtrum Youth Center, located at the Veterans of Foreign Wars-Ladies Auxiliary Hall on Hollywood Street, opened April 1, and has become a hot spot for kids from elementary school age on up to high school students.

The center is open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 4 to 8 p.m., and on Fridays and Saturdays from 4-10 p.m.

The Spechtrum, a ministry project of Portland-based Extraordinary Young People, already seems to have found a niche among local youth. On the day of center's grand opening, 262 young people showed up to see new the new facility, play games and watch a Christian hip hop concert.

The Spechtrum is the result of a year and a half of work, between meetings to secure its location, to gaining the trust of tribal officials, to gaining sponsorships with no less than Nike, which contributes prizes in the form of shoes and sportswear to high earners in its Champ Stamps points system.

But perhaps the biggest factor in getting the Spechtrum established was the work Extraordinary Young People did even before doing anything in Warm Springs. Extraordinary Young People chief executive officer

Christian rap artist Evan Lee Cummins, from Crow Agency, Mont., performs in a concert at the Spechtrum Youth Center, from 8 to 9:30 p.m. this Friday, April 29. Cummins is a student at Trinity Bible College in Ellendale,

North Dakota, and was nominated for a Native American Music Association (NAMMY) award in 2003.

The concert is free to youths who would normally visit the Spechtrum Youth Center.

Matt Burton, a former college and professional basketball player and former DJ, had been working with inner-city youth in Portland when he decided to start working with the Crow Tribe in eastern Montana.

"We got the opening to come to the reservation in Montana, and there was hardly anybody helping these people. I thought, 'Wow,'" Burton said. What he found was an area with a reported 85-90 percent unemployment, a high crime rate, and little hope.

"I got invited to go to Crow and moved there for a year. I got to know people, and hung out on the rez," Burton said.

"They said they wanted a youth center, a safe place for kids. We remodeled an old movie theater and did our thing. And we had a 50 percent reduction in crime and no suicides for now, and it's been almost a year and a half."

Burton looked to start a similar effort closer to his Portland home base. "So we looked in Yakima and Colville and Walla Walla, but the one that was closest, and the one we had the most relationships with was this one,"

he said of Warm Springs.

He began meeting with tribal officials and attended a youth conference in Warm Springs.

"I met with Harvey Jim and Kirby Heath, the quartermaster and head of the Veterans of Foreign Wars," Burton said. "I was just standing in front of the building talking to one of my employees, saying, 'Man, this is a nice building. I wish we could have this one. Because I looked around and watched the way the kids came down and cross Hollywood Boulevard, and they hadn't even put the skatepark in yet.'"

In fact, he said his initial talks with people in Warm Springs began a week before The Oregonian began running a series of stories asserting that Warm Springs as "the deadliest place for a child to grow up."

"I started meeting with all the tribal officials," he said. "I started sharing what I was doing. And people were just as excited as they are everywhere we go." After getting the okay from tribal officials and gaining use of the VFW building, he got sponsorship help from Nike. "When we got the corporate

sponsorship with Nike, then it just became that much more significant," he said.

Burton said gaining the attention of one of Oregon's largest corporations was not as daunting as it may seem, particularly since Nike has structure to donate to youth programs.

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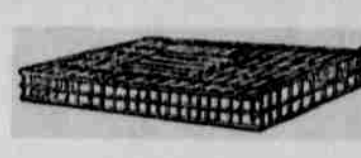
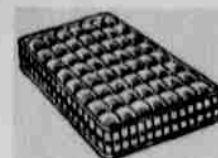
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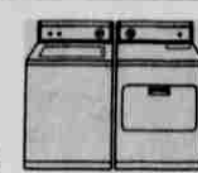
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## Salmon fishing halted on Columbia

(AP) - An agency that regulates the West Coast's biggest river has halted sport and commercial fishing for three kinds of fish after scientists became alarmed about a mysterious collapse in the population of salmon.

The Columbia River Compact voted last week to shut down sport fishing for salmon, steelhead trout and shad to avoid losing too many salmon that are preparing to spawn. Officials also suspended commercial fishing on selective stocks of hatchery fish.

The Columbia River and its tributaries in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana have historically been

the world's largest producer of chinook, the biggest of the Pacific salmon species.

Scientists had predicted that more than 200,000 chinook salmon would return to the Bonneville Dam east of Portland. But as of early last week only 2,030 had shown up. "There were a lot of people who declared the salmon crisis over," said Buzz Ramsey, a salmon fishing expert who works for a fishing tackle manufacturer. "But that's not the case at all."

Over the years governments have spent billions of dollars to rebuild the population after overfishing, logging, agriculture and development decimated salmon.

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