

Church group helps Simnasho with fence project

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

Though icy wind brought back reminders of winter, it didn't stop students working busily during their spring break trip in Simnasho.

Some of the middle school students weren't even much taller than the fence they worked to build.

The group from Oregon City quickly learned about the demands of fencing, but worked steadily through the cold as part of their bigger mission to help the community.

It's not the first trip of its kind.

The students volunteered their time as part of a much larger effort on behalf of the Oregon City Evangelical Church.

Members of the church have been helping local people for several years, according to Tami Wattenbarger.

Wattenbarger said church members first began traveling to Warm Springs about three years ago.

This trip is their seventeenth. Students spent the week building a fence near the Red Lake Corral in Simnasho, as well as weeding and picking up garbage near the Warm Springs Baptist Church.

According to Jason Smith, agricultural and range manager, the fence will help the Simnasho Grazing Group.

He explained, "What it's going to be is a holding pasture that is hooked onto the Red Lake Corral."

"This will be a great benefit to the Simnasho Grazing Group," Smith added. "They will be able to work their stock better, work their livestock more efficiently."

The group decided to work on the fencing, Wattenbarger said, because they hoped to have



Leslie Mitts/Spilyay

Youth from the Oregon City Evangelical Church worked during their spring break.

an even bigger impact than on prior trips.

She explained, "We wanted to do something out in the community a little bit more"

As for the youth working on the fence (which will be over a mile long), Smith said, "It a tough job for kids of that age, and they're finding out that fencing is very physical."

According to Katie Stagl, 12, "Basically it's a lot of hard work and we just kind of stick to it."

"It takes team work and strength and patience," Stagl said. "We had to just kind of realize that we were working for God and not for other people."

As for what motivates them, the students agree that God is the main factor.

Shawna Williams, 13, said, "You ask God for strength and he'll give you the strength to keep on giving."

According to Kenneth Forney, 14, the work goes quickly when they work as a team.

"Every time we go here we actually get ahead of schedule," he said. "Everyone just works at their best."

Wattenbarger said the church

members were motivated to come to Warm Springs instead of leaving the country to help.

Rather than helping elsewhere, she said, they felt more inclined to help those nearby—and they do all of their own fundraising for trips.

The work they've done has varied, she said, but they are happy to help in whatever way possible.

"You name it, we'll do it," Wattenbarger said with a laugh.

They've worked on various local buildings and houses, and the church is responsible for completing wiring, plumbing and more construction at the Spectrum Youth Center.

Wattenbarger and her husband are both contractors, so that type of work comes naturally to them, she said—but they aren't willing to stop at simply fixing up buildings.

During December the church members throw a Christmas party, and they've also painted houses and done additional construction locally.

But, Wattenbarger said, "Most important, though, is building relationships with the people."

"We're very big on going out and encouraging people and caring for them," Wattenbarger said. "That's really the most important thing."

The Wattenbarger family believes so strongly in helping local people that they also have a foster son from Warm Springs.

In Wattenbarger's opinion, her work with the Oregon City Evangelical Church is all part of using her faith.

"My faith is dead if I don't do something with it," she said.

Plus, Wattenbarger added, "We just love the people over here."

Coming from a rough childhood of her own, Wattenbarger is also motivated to help those

who have undergone a difficult upbringing.

"It only takes one to break the cycle," she said.

The amount of trips has slowly been increasing over time. Now, Wattenbarger said, they travel to Warm Springs regularly.

"We're over here almost every month," Wattenbarger said.

In fact, the church has so many members eager to come to Warm Springs to help that they had to establish a board to manage the trips, Wattenbarger said.

The size of the church helps—the Oregon City Evangelical Church has over 1,000 members.

Their work locally also helps church members back at home, Wattenbarger said.

"It gives us a chance as a church to learn to work together," she explained.

In the end, Wattenbarger said, they hope to be able to help the Warm Springs community connect with other communities—"We're trying to become a bridge," she said.

Wattenbarger encourages those needing help to contact the church.

"We're game for more," she added. "Work is never done, that's for sure."

If anyone wishes to request help from the Oregon City Evangelical Church, call (503) 656-8582.

Births

Nakomis Wanbli Smith
Shirley Eder and Frank "Footer" Smith are pleased to announce the birth of their grandson, Nakomis Wanbli Smith. Nakomis was born to Shasta Smith on March 24. He weighed 7 pounds 10 ounces.

Sandra Cecile Tolentino
Phil Tolentino Jr. and Maria Moroyoqui of Warm Springs are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter Sandra Cecile Tolentino, born on April 6, 2007. The father's parents are Philemon and Shirley Tolentino. The mother's mother is Sandra Moroyoqui.

Stone setting and Memorial

There will be a stone-setting and memorial for Anna Halfmoon in May.

Stonesetting: Thursday, May 10 at 9 a.m. at the Agency Cemetery. Services to follow at longhouse.

Memorial Service: Saturday, May 12 at 9 a.m. at the Nez Perce Longhouse in Nespelem, Wash.

SUBWAY
eat fresh.
475-4754

24 NE Plum St.

WES' FLOOR COVERING
Floorstogo

873 SW Hwy 97
Madras, OR 97741
475-3723

- Sales
- Repairs
- Installation

Madras
Design Center

- Shaw Flooring • Manufactured Stone
- Windows • Flooring • Cabinets • Tile/Vinyl
- Counter Tops • Area Rugs • Fire Places
- Siding • Vinyl Fencing
- Molding • Light Fixtures

Special Orders Welcome! Builder Discounts

"Let us take care of all your design needs!"

Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday by appointment only.

1825 S.W. Hwy 97, Madras • South of Miller Ford • 475-1107

Toys-Tools-Housewares-Clothing-Crafts-Gifts-

The Outpost
Your Bargain Connection

Open Monday-Sat 9:00-6:00

All New All The Time!

717 S.W. 5th St. Madras Or.

Just in!
\$3.00 AND UP

PORCELAIN DOLLS

Shower Curtain Sets
\$4.50-\$12.00

<http://www.theoutpoststore.com/>

Toys-Tools-Housewares-Clothing-Crafts-Gifts-