

Children and adults had the opportunity to learn about making moccasins recently through an annual class with Culture and Heritage. Mary Ann Meanus (at left in photo at right) taught the class in the lobby of the Museum at Warm Springs. About a dozen people attended throughout the three day class. Among the students Nicole (left, in picture below) and Haley Wahnetah made moccasins during the class.



Leslie Mitts/Spilyay

New director at Voc Rehab

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

A new director took control of the Vocational Rehab program last month—David Conroy, began the position along with his 11-year-old service dog, Zeus.

Conroy's story is a complicated one. He was born in Africa to Australian parents, and by the time he turned 16 years old Conroy had traveled around the world with his family three and a half times.

"My dad moved from country to country like people move across town," Conroy explained. Conroy originally came to Oregon when his father, a mining engineer, took a job in Portland.

After a position in Illinois and one in Indiana, Conroy said, he wanted to return to Oregon.

According to Conroy, "I'd been trying to get back to Oregon ever since I left it."

"I really call home two places: Australia and Oregon," Conroy explained.

Conroy most recently worked in a position as a vocational rehab counselor for the state of Oregon. That job led him to work extensively with those on the Umatilla Indian Reservation—where Zeus was



David Conroy

known as an honored elder, he said.

In fact, Zeus can be quite the flirt when he's not working, according to Conroy.

Zeus helps Conroy by performing a variety of tasks: opening doors, answering phones, helping him walk and balance and can even take off socks and pick a dime up off the floor.

"He's a very talented fellow," Conroy said. "He even helps my wife with the laundry."

Conroy has held a variety of other positions ranging from working with the hearing impaired to working as director for an independent living facility. In general, he said, "I have, really, a passion for helping people make their lives better."

"Working with people with disabilities is not only a vocation

for me, it's something that I really love to do," Conroy added.

His cross-cultural upbringing also helps him in that line of work, Conroy said.

"I really love being in an environment with different nationalities, different languages and different people and really building bridges," Conroy explained.

Conroy is married but does not have any children—only two dogs and "a very pushy cat."

As for his future in this area, Conroy said, "We really feel at home here. As far as I know, we're here to stay."

He's also excited about his work at Vocational Rehab. "I believe that not only I, but we as an agency, are here to listen, to learn and to serve the people," Conroy said.

Bill to halt Metolius resorts fails

(AP) — A bill that would have halted development of two destination resorts near the Metolius River in Central Oregon has died in committee, lawmakers said.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski sealed the fate of the bill in a letter condemning the proposal, saying it would be improper for lawmakers to trump a Jefferson County zoning decision and an appeal.

County commissioners, citing a desire to collect additional property tax revenue, mapped the two forestland parcels for resorts in December.

The county decision has been appealed to the state Land Use Board of Appeals, which is the proper forum

for a zoning challenge, the governor wrote to state Rep. Diane Rosenbaum, D-Portland, the chairwoman of the House Elections, Ethics and Rules Committee.

The bill had languished in her committee since it cleared the Senate a month ago.

"I support following the established processes for resolving those challenges as they relate to land use decisions," Kulongoski wrote. "For this reason, I do not support Senate Bill 30."

The letter amounts to a promise of a veto, and supporters of the legislation said Friday there was no reason to pursue the proposed measure any further.

Still, the debate over the future of the river and the poten-

tial impact of the two resorts is far from over.

"I am disappointed but not dissuaded," said state Sen. Ben Westlund, D-Tumalo, who sponsored the bill and saw it grow into statewide issue.

"This closes one chapter in a book that I think will have a better ending for one of Oregon's special and unique places," Westlund said.

He has supported resorts in the past, but said such developments don't belong in or near the Metolius River Basin.

The river forms the southern border of the Warm Springs Reservation before it ends at Lake Billy Chinook.

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