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Spilyay Tymoo

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Casino process takes a step forward

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs received word from the federal government last week that the BIA can proceed with the environmental review process that could lead to the tribe building a casino resort at Cascade Locks.

The word from the Interior Department was that the BIA would proceed with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process, which evaluates the impact of developing the project at the Cascade Locks site.

The next step in the DEIS process will involve a series of public hearings on the DEIS.

Hearings will likely be in Warm Springs, Cascade Locks, Hood River, east Portland, and Stevenson, Wash., according to officials. Specific dates and times were not yet known, but the hearings may happen within the next few months.

"It's good news that the Secretary is considering this," said Tribal Council Chairman Ron Suppah. "I'm happy for the project, and hope it moves forward."

Council Vice Chair Aurolyn Stwyer

commented, "During this process, the tribe has faithfully and methodically done everything as recommended. We've done a lot of work, and that is paying some benefit."

Some applications rejected

While allowing Warm Springs and seven other tribal proposals to proceed, the Interior Department last week also denied 11 off-reservation casino proposals by other tribes, and sent back another 11 applications as incomplete.

Among tribes that were rejected were the Muckleshoot, Colville Con-

federated Tribes and the Lower Elwha in Washington state, and the Burns Paiute Tribe in Oregon. The Burns Paiute proposal called for a 42-acre site in Ontario, Ore. The Interior Department said applications by the tribes were incomplete.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs' proposed site at Cascade Locks, 40 miles east of Portland on the Columbia River, is within the Ceded Lands of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

Officials at Cascade Locks were encouraged by the recent Interior Department news.

"All we were asking for is a hearing on the merits of the case," said Chuck Daughtry, general manager of the Port of Cascade Locks. "It's a big step."

The port and city of Cascade Locks, and Hood River County officials are supporters of the tribes' proposal. A main benefit would be new jobs in the community, said Daughtry.

The tribes' proposal also has the support of Gov. Ted Kulongoski, who two years ago signed a gaming compact with the tribes.

See CASINO on 8

Miss Warm Springs Pageant set for this Friday

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

A new Miss Warm Springs will be crowned during the Miss Warm Springs Pageant this Friday evening, Jan. 18. The event will be held in the community center social hall, with dinner starting at 5 p.m. and the pageant beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The crowning of the new Miss Warm Springs means that Sallie Polk-Adams will be ending her reign. The year was filled with conferences and meetings, Polk-Adams said, and a few powwows.

Her favorite activity from the year was a conference with the National Indian Education Association in Spokane.

"I got to meet so many different people that I hadn't met at any of the conferences I've ever been to," Polk-Adams explained.

The conference featured a variety of different activities, she added, including many that aren't always featured in conferences.

"It was fun for pretty much everyone," she said. With activities like hip-hop dancing workshops, flute playing and a comedian, the conference also featured speakers on topics about community and Indian life. "A lot of real stuff," Polk-Adams said.

In addition, those attending the conference were able to spend time relaxing with other Native Americans from the northwest.

Part of the highlight of the conference, Polk-Adams said, was to be able to "just interact with different Native Americans throughout the northwest and see what their culture is like."

One of her biggest challenges, Polk-Adams said, involved scheduling and arranging time for all of the events she attended as a representative of the tribes.

For that reason, her advice to the future Miss Warm Springs is to get those types of things settled at the beginning of her reign.

"Get your agenda planned way ahead in advance, that way you know what's going on and where you're going," she said, and also be aware of whether or not you need to prepare a speech or wear your crown.

Another challenging aspect of her reign involved learning to deal with criticism, she said. When faced with criticism at first, Polk-Adams said, "I didn't know really how to handle myself."

In the end, she said, "I felt like I did a good job. A few other people have told me I have too."

See MISS WARM SPRINGS on 5



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

In February, Simasho will host Thirty-First Annual Lincoln's Birthday Powwow. The powwow court candidates, such as Mileena Edwards (above) are preparing for the event through the sales of raffle tickets that support the powwow contests. (See candidate statements on pages 4 and 5).

After 33 years, youth conference returning to Warm Springs

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

Warm Springs will be hosting the Northwest Indian Youth Conference this May, and plans are progressing quickly.

Tribal Council heard a report last week from the conference planning committee.

The Northwest Indian Youth Conference originated in Warm Springs 33 years ago.

According to Aurolyn Stwyer, a tribal council representative who is working with the committee developing the conference, the conference will provide a great opportunity for Warm Springs as well as provide a boost to the local economy.

"We're looking at working together in a systematic way with the community in making this a successful conference," Stwyer told the other members of Tribal Council.

Teepees will be provided at the powwow grounds and rooms are set-aside at Kah-Tee-Ta Resort, and Stwyer said they are also hoping to work with motels in Madras in order to arrange lodging.

Registration for those attending will be \$65, and that means significant revenue for the tribes.

Typically over 1,000 youth attend the conference each year.

In addition to revenue created with

registration, food vendors will be available at the powwow grounds and that money will serve as revenue for the tribes as well.

"We're really excited about the opportunity to bring this to Warm Springs," Stwyer said.

In the past, representatives from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs have always traveled to the youth conference, which is hosted by a different reservation in the northwest each year.

High school and middle school youth, including many students who are involved with the high school Indian Club, are volunteering to help lead the conference. So far, over 30 students have volunteered.

Local youth will be planning and hosting the entire conference, and some will undergo leadership training with the Ford Foundation.

Jaylyn Suppah, from OSU extension, is working to plan and promote the conference and said they will be holding planning meetings with local students throughout the month and until the conference in May.

The theme for the conference involves the ancestors and the strength they provide for the future.

Those organizing the conference are planning to dedicate portions to the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional aspects of life.

See YOUTH CONFERENCE on 8

Tribal members encouraged to apply for state health plan

As a community, Warm Springs has the fewest number of participants receiving the Oregon Health Plan, but those interested could benefit from the resource.

The Department of Human Services is preparing to open Oregon Health Plan Standard to a limited number of people through a new process called the Oregon Health Plan Standard Reservation List.

The Oregon Health Plan Standard provides health care coverage to low income, non-pregnant adults 19 years and older.

MartiRai Ramsey, contact representative for Indian Health Services, said, "We're eligible but no one is accessing it."

People interested in applying for the health plan standard benefits must place themselves on the Oregon Health Plan Standard reservation list.

They can get on the list by con-

"It's Important for people to get signed up because it's an alternate resources. It brings more revenue into the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center."

MartiRay Ramsey
Indian Health Services representatives

tacting Ramsey at Indian Health Services to complete and submit an Oregon Health Plan reservation request form, calling a central phone bank, or submitting their information online. The reservation list will be open from January 28 through February 29.

After the list closes, the Department of Human Services will randomly draw a predetermined number of names from the reservation list and send health plan standard applications to

those individuals whose names are drawn.

The Human Services department will repeat the monthly random drawing and mailing of applications until a sustainable number is reached.

"It's important for people to get signed up because it's an alternate resource," Ramsey said. "It brings more revenue into the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center."

In addition, Ramsey said, "It gives a bit of relief to the managed care program. The business at Indian Health Services can bill the Oregon Health Plan for services that people receive at the clinic."

If people are referred elsewhere or need specialty services, Ramsey added, the Oregon Health Plan would cover those services as well.

In Ramsey's opinion, "As a community, it is important to exhaust all resources."

Only Oregon Health Plan Standard,

due to its limited openings, will require the reservation list process.

Anyone interested in applying for the Oregon Health Plan Plus or other Department of Human Services medical assistance programs can complete an health plan application at any time to see if they qualify for coverage.

Ramsey works with the community to get them signed up for the Oregon Health Plan and Medicare.

People can reach Ramsey at 553-1196, extension 4193, if they have questions.

Starting in March, the state of Oregon will be drawing 2,000 names per month.

Applications will be sent to those whose names are drawn to see if they qualify for the Oregon Health Plan.

That part of the process will last from March to November.

For more information, or to apply, visit www.oregon.gov/DHS/open.