



Spilyay Tymoo

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Members support casino at hearing

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

The proposed Bridge of the Gods Casino drew mostly supportive comments at the first of five public hearings last week.

Nearly 40 people testified at the hearing in front of a crowd of more than 200 people at Kah-Nee-Ta.

Tribal Council Chairman Ron Suppah spoke of support for the casino that he has seen coming from various outlets, including Governor Kulongoski. Suppah also said he believes the casino is necessary due to recent economic problems.

"I cannot overstate the significance of this project to our tribes' future," Suppah said.

While Kah-Nee-Ta has provided some employment and revenue for the tribes, Suppah added, it is severely limited because of the remote location. In Suppah's opinion, "Only a Gorge location can meet the need to improve economic self-sufficiency."

Gerald Smith, chief operations officer for the tribes, spoke of the economic difficulties currently challenging tribal members: with over 28 percent of tribal members unemployed, and 33 percent of families living below the poverty level, the need for an increase of jobs is evident, he said.

"The tribe simply has no other



Leona Ike addresses the casino DEIS forum at Kah-Nee-Ta.

choice," he explained.

Raymond Tsumpti commented on problems like a current housing shortage, and spoke of the tribes' connection to the Columbia River.

"The opportunity to go back home is now," Tsumpti said.

Leona Ike also spoke of the tribes' connection to the Cascade Locks area.

"Cascade Locks is 37 miles from our reservation boundary, but Cascade Locks is our sacred, ancient homeland,"

"I think wonderful things will happen... and we truly do need it."

Rosalind Sampson

Ike said. "Our spirit still resides there and has never left."

Arlita Rhoan spoke of the controversy surrounding a potential long commute for tribal members who would travel to Cascade Locks for work.

"Our Indians traveled from many, many years back," Rhoan said. "Travelling really isn't nothing to us."

Lyle Rhoan said the tribes have always respected the land and know how to care for it. "We were taught, being Godly people, stewardship over this earth," Rhoan explained.

In addition, Rhoan said, "Economics tells me that we need to move to the river."

"I see big things that could happen for our people down there," he added.

Dylan Miller, 13, spoke of his hope for the future and his desire to eventually be able to attend college and have a career.

"The Cascade Locks casino will help me to do that," he said.

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Smith wins Golden Gloves

Warm Springs boxer Jasper Smith won the Oregon Golden Gloves championship last weekend in Milwaukee.

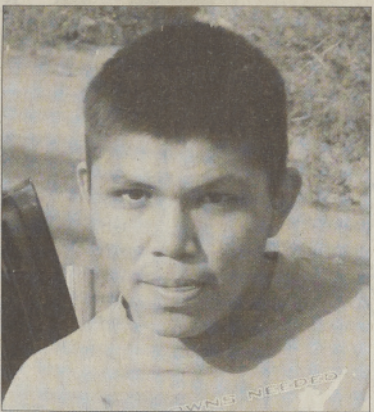
Smith, 18, is a senior at Madras High School, and a member of the Warm Springs Boxing Club, coached by Austin Smith Sr. and Vernon Smith Sr.

Jasper is the first Warm Springs boxer to win the Golden Gloves.

"It made me feel proud," said his grandfather Alvis Smith Sr., "because boxing is in our blood. He's following the old ways."

Jasper's accomplishment is great, Alvis Sr. said, because boxing is the toughest sport.

"It's one on one," he said. "You go in the ring alone. If you lose, you lose alone, and if you win, you win alone."



Jasper Smith

There are very few kids who can do it, because it is a tough sport, but once you win you win forever."

Fluhr serving as acting chief of Fire and Safety

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

Lynn Fluhr is serving as the new acting fire chief for Warm Springs Fire and Safety, and she's no stranger to the demands of the job. In addition to working for two fire departments and running a long-haul trucking company with her husband, Lynn has two sons: Zack, 8, and Aaron, 1.

Fluhr, 29, has worked in the fire services industry for over 12 years.

She has served as the fire chief for the South Sherman Fire District for six years, and also works as their budget officer and secretary.

Her list of credentials and experience shows an obvious dedication to the fire services industry: she works as an instructor, 911 Tri-County Communication Executive, serves on the Sherman County Fire Defense Board, and works as a liaison between the

Bureau of Land Management. Fluhr also serves as a reserve deputy for the Klickitat County Sheriff's Office.

Before beginning to work as the active fire chief, Fluhr also worked for Warm Springs Fire and Safety full-time as a firefighter/EMT.

After being born and raised in Warm Springs, Fluhr said, she views it as an honor to be working in her home community.

For now, it also means traveling to and from Sherman County on the weekends.

It's made possible, she said, because of excellent staff members—and a lot of delegation for her job in Sherman County.

As for her children, Fluhr said, they have practically been raised in the fire station. In fact, her son Zack said, "It's fun. I just get to hang out with the firefighters."

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Progress on fish passage at dam

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

By this time next year the fish passage facility at Round Butte dam is scheduled to begin operating, according to the construction schedule for the project.

The tribes and PGE are co-owners of the hydro dam, and the fish passage project is part of the federal relicensing agreement among the tribes, PGE, federal and state agencies and other groups.

"This is a significant project for the tribes," said Jim Manion, manager of Warm Springs Power & Water Enterprises, speaking last week at the annual Pelton-Round Butte fisheries workshop.

"When it comes to fish migrating the Deschutes, the tribes take a very serious and engaged look at what needs to be done," said Manion.

He said the tribes, PGE and others have been working hard over the past 10 plus years on the fish passage project, "And I'm looking forward to seeing this project come to completion, and see a fishery restored over the next year."

Manion and about 100 other interested parties met for the fisheries workshop last week at the fairgrounds in Madras. The workshop began with an overview of the fish passage project, which is large endeavour financially and environmentally.

Through the \$90-million investment, the tribes and PGE are hoping to reopen 226 upstream miles of river to salmon and steelhead migration.

The upper reaches of river have been inaccessible to anadromous fish since the 1960s, when the dams were built.

The problem has been the lack of downstream current in Lake Billy Chinook. Salmon and steelhead trying to migrate downstream have been unable to find their way through the lake because of the weak or sometimes backward flowing current.

To address the problem, the tribes and PGE are constructing a facility called the selective water withdrawal

tower, located in the lake just behind Round Butte dam.

The 273-foot tall tower will draw in water from the lake, creating a current to guide downstream migrating fish. The fish will be drawn into the facility, where they will be separated according to size.

Fish that are ready to migrate downriver to the ocean will be trucked from the collection facility past the dam and released into the Deschutes.

The tower's draw of warmer water off the surface of Lake Billy Chinook will also keep the reservoir cooler in the summer, creating a healthier environment for fish.

The original fish collection facility at the reregulating dam will be used to collect the returning adult fish.

The hope is that the project will bring spring Chinook and sockeye salmon to the Metolius River and steelhead to the Crooked River to Bowman Dam, and the Deschutes River to Big Falls near Redmond.

Arcade set to open this month at Plaza

The Playstation @ Express Shop is set to be the newest addition to the Warm Springs Plaza.

The business will feature a lounge and arcade aimed at local youth, as well as a 24-hour ATM and a DVD rental machine.

The grand opening of the business will be on March 24 at 10 a.m.

Quantae Cole is overseeing the business, and said it will be run entirely by the youth.

Because of that they'll be working with WED to train involved youth in everything from writing business plans, work skills, dressing for success and

business management.

"It's an arcade, yes, it's a lounge yes, but we'll be doing more services than just that," Cole said.

One benefit the business will bring to the community is an increase in activity.

"It will bring more not only locals here to the area but it will bring tourists who are coming in," Cole said.

"It will put Warm Springs on a better map, as far as not only youth services, but side attractions," Cole added.

Though they're geared towards youth, Cole said, all ages are welcome.

"The reason we're opening on the 24th is because that's spring break," Cole explained.

"We're excited to have agreed that that will be the opening date. We're hoping that a big turnout comes."

The Playstation @ Express Shop will be open from 1 p.m. until 9 p.m., and Cole said that gives local youth a safe place to socialize in the evenings.

"The kids already come to Eagle Tech for computer usage. They're there until they close. This will provide them several options," Cole said.

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