

# Lil' Miss Warm Springs program hosts "Crazy About Culture"

By Leslie Mitts  
Spilyay Tymoo

Community members had the chance to become "Crazy About Culture" after a recent Lil' Miss Warm Springs Event.

The "Crazy About Culture" night was a Lil' Miss Warm Springs activity held to build stronger relationships among community members and to promote a learning environment for young people.

During the event, current title holders spoke to the crowd about what the program has taught them, and community members had a chance to complete traditional craft projects.

Elyse Bagley, 11, spoke to the crowd about her experiences with the Lil' Miss and Junior Miss Warm Springs pageants—which she has been involved in since she was three years old.

"It changed the way I looked at things," Bagley said. "It is preparing me for my future."

According to Bagley, "I didn't know very much about myself before."

Soraya Mendez also said she's learned a lot during the pageants, and added, "I am very proud to



Elyse Bagley spoke to the crowd about her experiences.

be an ambassador for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs."

Through her participation in the events, Mendez said, she learned about her culture, public speaking skills, and even spent time with her mother to sew the wing dress that she wore for the event.

The pageant began in 1982, according to Carol Allison, who started the pageant when she heard elders complaining that young people were beginning to wear regalia from other regions.

Because of that, Allison said, the pageant is an educational program and not a competition. The main objective, she said, is to teach local girls about their heritage.

"That's the whole idea of it is to teach them their culture," Allison explained.

Also, Allison added, "It prepares the girls to want to run for Miss Warm Springs."

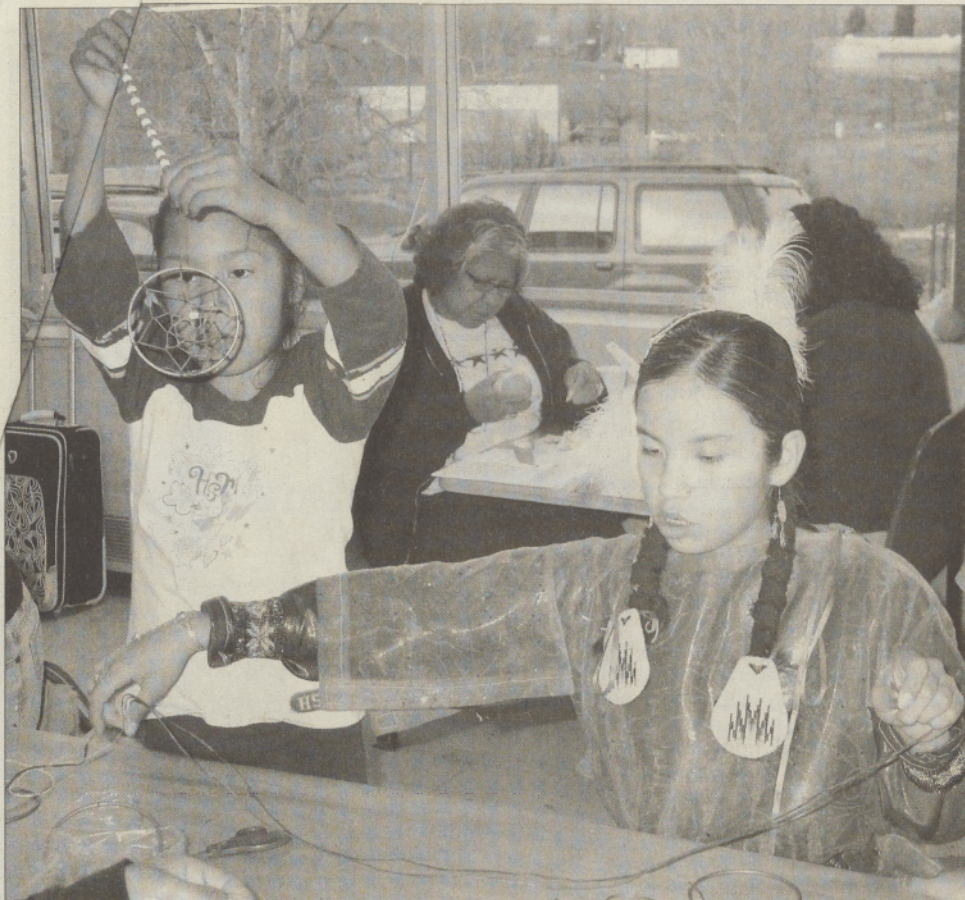
Girls from ages three to 17 participate in the pageant, which Allison said will continue even though she retired last year.

They are judged on things like proper behavior and public speaking skills, Allison said, and five queens and five princesses are named.

This year Allison said they hope to have additional sessions to teach culture similar to the "Crazy About Culture" event.

They also plan to make other changes to the program in the upcoming month and can always use volunteers, Allison said.

"We always need volunteers. We need the parents to be involved with their children," Allison said. "We just welcome anybody to come in and do something for the kids."



Leslie Mitts/Spilyay

Lilamae Wewa, 8, joined Elyse Bagley, 11, in making crafts during the cultural event. Community members had the opportunity to eat dinner and make a variety of traditional crafts throughout the evening.

## More birthday wishes...

### To classmates turning 50

Alicia "Lurch" Elston, from Huckabay, Texas, was traveling recently through the Warm Springs Reservation.

She wanted to wish all her classmates a happy birthday, to all who turned 50 years old.

In the picture are Lyle Rhoan Sr., Marcus Sooksoit, Lyle Katchia, Delbert Garcia, Alicia "Lurch" Elston, Helena Jackson, Sharlayne Garcia, Nancy Sooksoit, Fran



Moses-Ahern, Joa<sup>a</sup> Moses, (kneeling) Arlissa and Amiel Wiggie Sooksoit (fr<sup>n</sup> left), and Rhoan.



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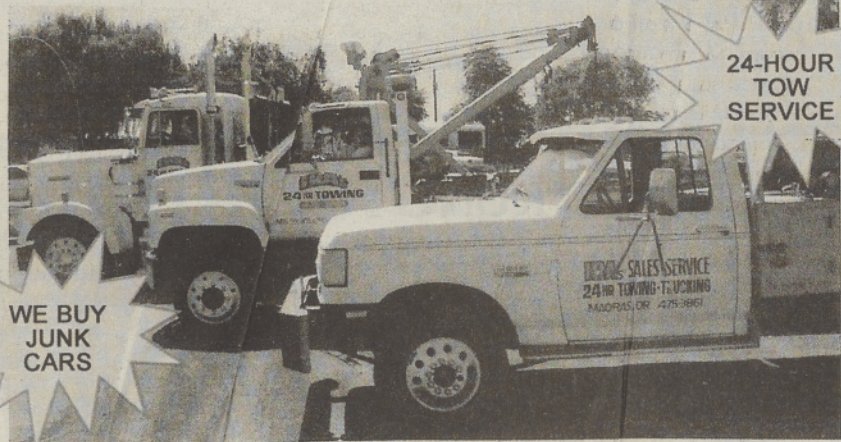
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