

Have a Happy Pi-Ume-Sha



Spilyay Tymo

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Questions abound for huckleberries

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymo

Huckleberries are not nearly as abundant as they once were.

"When I go out now, I can't even find any berries where we used to find them," said Adeline Miller, tribal elder.

Miller, speaking on the cultural panel at the huckleberry conference last week at Kah-Nee-Ta, said:

"Sometimes I'll have to buy berries because I want to have some. We shouldn't have to do that, because we like picking our own berries."

The U.S. Forest Service and the Warm Springs Confederated Tribes organized the conference, which focused on ways to restore huckleberries.

Representatives of other Oregon tribes and conservation groups also attended.

The conference speakers discussed the key issues facing the health of the wild huckleberries, particularly the huckleberry patches on National Forest and tribal land.



Huckleberries on national forest.

Role of fire

One of the key questions facing huckleberries, as discussed at the conference, is the relationship of periodic controlled burns to the health of the huckleberries.

Before the arrival of non-Indians, the Indians of the region would periodically set fires that burned through the under story of the forest. These fires helped the huckleberries by eliminating the competing vegetation, said Jean Rice, forest ecologist with the Mt. Hood National Forest.

Now, there are no such controlled burns on the Mt. Hood National For-

est for the purpose of enhancing huckleberry habitat, she said. Instead, other methods, such as manual removal, are employed to eliminate competing vegetation.

But there remains the unanswered question of whether the fire itself – rather than just the removal of the competing vegetation – helps the huckleberries.

"Research doesn't conclude whether they need fire or not," said Rice. "We don't understand the complexity of huckleberry."

If the huckleberries just need less competing vegetation, "we can do that with chainsaws," said Matt Jimenez, planning forester with the BIA in Warm Springs.

But there may be other benefits to burning, such as creating a charcoal bed.

"It's something that is still up in the air," he said.

Even if it were proven that fire somehow helps the huckleberries to grow, there would be the problem of implementing controlled burns on the national forest, said Rice.

"Fire is hard for us to use because we are so close to Portland," said Rice. "And we have a very narrow window to do prescribed burning."

Also, she said, the Forest Service budget is being reduced, and the agency would not have the resources to prescribe burn specifically for huckleberries.

Over-picking

Another significant issue facing the huckleberries is the recreational and commercial pickers who harvest the berries on the public land before the tribes hold the Huckleberry Feast.

The feast marks the start of the tribal harvesting season for huckleberries. But often the berry patches in the national forests, which are usual and accustomed harvesting places of the tribes, have already been picked over by the time of the feast, leaving fewer berries for the tribes.

See HUCKLEBERRIES on 11

153rd anniversary of Treaty

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will host the 39th Annual Pi-Ume-Sha Treaty Days next Friday through Sunday, June 27-29.

The three-day powwow commemorates the signing of the Treaty of 1855, signed 153 years ago this month.

The signing date of the Treaty was June 25, 1855. One-hundred and fifty-one tribal leaders signed the document, following a three-day Council of the Wasco and Walla Walla tribes at The Dalles.

By the terms of the treaty, the tribes gave up ownership claim to 10 million acres of land, known since as the Ceded Lands. In exchange the tribes received the reservation land located between Mt. Jefferson and the Deschutes River. By the Treaty, the tribes also retained rights to the traditional use of the Ceded Lands.

Pi-Ume-Sha Treaty Days began in the late 1960s. While commemorating the signing of the Treaty of 1855, Pi-Ume-Sha also traditionally has honored the veterans and service men and women of the Armed Forces.

The powwow begins with the Grand Entry at 7 p.m. on Friday, June 27. Grand Entries are also scheduled on Saturday at 1 and 7 p.m., and on Sunday at 2 p.m. The Traditional Dress Parade is at 11 a.m. on Saturday. Dance contests are throughout the weekend.

A health fair will be on the Wednesday before Pi-Ume-Sha at the Community Center. (More powwow information on page 6.)

Crews respond to area fires

Warm Springs Fire and Safety and Fire Management responded to three fires around Warm Springs on Sunday and Monday of this week.

The largest of the three fires was at Greeley Heights. This fire was first reported to dispatch at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 15.

The fire appears to have started near the residence at 2542 Mt. Jefferson St., according to Fire Management.

The fire grew to 148 acres. Assisting Fire Management and Fire and Safety were BLM and Forest Services resources.

Crews were doing mop-up work on Tuesday of this week. Cause of this fire was being investigated, and appears to have been caused by accident.

A fire was reported at 5:44 p.m. on Monday in the West Hills area. This fire burned across 14 acres, and is considered suspicious in origin. Part of the BLM-Forest Services resources helped with this fire. They were used as overnight supervision, to allow the Fire Management and Fire and Safety crews a chance to rest.

Also on Monday, a fire was reported on Tenino Road, milepost 10, alongside the road. This fire burned a quarter of an acre.



Classes at ECE held their graduation ceremonies recently. Those graduating will be going to kindergarten next year. (More ECE pictures on 9.)

Medical error takes life of traditional elder

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymo

A Yakama man with ties to the Warm Springs community died recently as the result of a possible medical error at St. Charles Medical Center-Bend.

Paxiownut 'Floyd' S. Shock suffered injuries as the result of a car crash when he was traveling to Warm Springs in early May.

Neda Wesley said Shock is the first cousin of her husband, Jimmy Wesley. Shock was traveling to Warm Springs to assist her with a traditional medicine service, Wesley said.

Because only a few people are left who can do this type of ceremony, Wesley said, she is especially saddened.

"I felt at a great loss," she said. "There is no other person that does this work," Wesley explained. "Its like

you lost part of your person."

"I mourn the loss of that valuable person," Wesley said. "He was my partner. We really enjoyed doing our work."

According to Wesley, Shock felt lucky to be alive after his time in the service. She said, "He came through a war and he said 'All I lost was my arm, a lot of people lost their lives, I'm lucky.' That was the way he was."

Now, Wesley said, she will be searching for someone to train in order to pass along the traditions of the medicine people.

Shock was born in Moxee on October 6, 1943 to Wesley Shock and Velma Frank. He was raised and educated in Pendleton, the Yakima Valley and Fort Sill, OK.

Shock served his country in the U.S. Army during the early 1960's. He was a member of the Yakama Nation and

the Washut religion. He worked as a welder in the Bremerton Shipyards and in various capacities for the Yakama Nation.

Shock enjoyed traveling, telling stories, watching his great-grandchildren play basketball and was an avid sports fan. He is survived by his wife, Delores Shock of White Swan; five sons, John Shock of Florida, Kerry Shock of Pendleton, Leland Shock of White Swan, Myron Shock of Toppenish and Delvis Jim of White Swan; one daughter, Karen Pinkham of Toppenish; seventeen grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren and the Wyena family.

St-Charles Medical Center-Bend announced that an incorrectly adjusted tracheostomy tube blocked his airway and resulted in his death. This happened two days before he was to be moved to another facility closer to his home

in Washington.

"We send our deepest condolences to the patient's family, and want to assure the community that this was an isolated incident," said James A. Diegel, president and CEO of Cascade Healthcare Community in a press release. "We have already found areas of improvement and are implementing new procedures to mitigate this risk going forward."

Hospital officials said steps have been taken to change work procedures related to this type of treatment. "It's not enough to say we're sorry," Diegel said.

"We are using this incident to educate our own staff, and also to help other health care providers across the region and the nation learn from this incident."