

TeleCo Corner

Telemedicine Comes to Warm Springs

by **Marsha Spellman**
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Two years ago, my dad died of congestive heart failure. From the time he had his first bout of heart failure until the time he passed away, every morning my dad would wake up and stand on a scale, put on a finger monitor and a blood pressure cuff. This doesn't seem unusual, but this was not any old scale. It was a new tele-health device wired into the telephone jack of his home.

A few minutes after he stood on that scale and put on the other medical items, all the information that these devices gathered would be transmitted to a remote medical center where local nurses would read the results.

If anything concerned the nurses, they would call him to ask about his health. Checking weight, blood pressure and oxygenation levels are critical for keeping a heart patient healthy.

If he gained a few pounds this might indicate he was retaining fluid, which might mean his heart was not functioning correctly or his kidneys were starting to fail.

If they thought he needed medical care, a nurse would

come to the house to check up on him. With this system, he didn't have to wait to receive care until he was so ill that he was in critical condition and needed to be hospitalized.

Why am I telling you this? Isn't this an article about telecommunications?

My dad was fortunate to live in a community that had broadband telecommunications and be an early adopter of what is called "Tele-health" care or sometimes "Tele-medicine."

The reason that I am telling you, is that this new world of medical care will be able to be available in Warm Springs, once the new phone company builds out its new broadband network.

Because these, and other, new medical devices need a lot of bandwidth to transmit the data through the phone wires, it is not possible without a broadband network and broadband connections to a home or medical facility.

Tele-health care is the new step in modern medicine. It enables medical consultations to be conducted between patients and health professionals across different locations.

Telemedicine will enable the patients in Warm Springs to "see" doctors in Portland or Bend without having to drive

Warm Springs will be part of the medical technical revolution.

hours for an appointment.

Medical staff can share test results without having to wait days for specialists to look at an x-ray or MRI in a hospital hours away. You can even have your doctor in Warm Springs look into your ear with what may look like a standard ear probe, but have a doctor in Portland read the results.

All of this will be possible with the use of new broadband technology will be offered throughout the reservation by the new Warm Springs Telecommunications Company.

In addition, Warm Springs applied, and has been accepted, to be part of a new network to serve hospitals and clinics throughout Oregon.

Five years ago, the Oregon Health Network (OHN) received \$20 million from the Federal Communications Commission to build a new broadband network to connect rural health clinics with some of the state's large hospitals, including Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) in Portland and Bend

Medical Center.

OHN is committed to making quality care available to every patient regardless of their location. Being a participant in this groundbreaking development will provide multiple benefits to clinics statewide, including here at Warm Springs.

Like the rest of the telecom changes coming to Portland, none of this will happen overnight.

It might be years before we see these programs in use with all the new technology and medical devices necessary to make it happen.

Warm Springs will be part of the medical technical revolution. Be patient. But remember, you will be a better served patient once these new telecommunication services are in place. It is part of the reason that the tribes have been working for many years to make these changes possible, by improving the telecommunications on the reservation.

The Warm Springs Telecommunications Company (WSTC) is a tribally chartered enterprise whose mission is to bring advanced broadband services to the Warm Springs tribes, including voice, data and video. The start-up company expects to begin delivering services in the fall of 2011.

Native Thunder



Yvonne Iverson/Spilyay

Native Thunder riders present a donation to Boys & Girls Club of Warm Springs director June Smith.

We would like to send a huge "Thank You" to everyone that participated and supported the First Annual Native Thunder Show & Shine that was hosted by Kah-Neeta High Desert Resort & Casino and Northwest Cycles on Saturday, May 14. The event faced challenges including a 70 percent forecast for rain and competition from various other events in the Central Oregon area.

We did have a good turnout in spite of that, and participants included representatives from Central Oregon Abate in Bend, local participants and individuals all the way from Yakima, Wash.

The route for the Poker Run took riders on a tour of the north end of Warm Springs to Simnasho where the first stop was at Three Warriors Market. It then ran through Wapinitia over to Maupin for the second stop. It routed up the river and canyon to Highway 97; back down through Madras to the Desert Inn in Metolius for the third stop where Jan set up an awesome picnic for the riders. And it wrapped up by taking a tour of Lake Simtustus and Pelton Dam on the way back to Kah-Nee-Ta.

The riders who participated in the Poker Run expressed a genuine enjoyment of the ride and scenery and are looking forward to next year's event.

This first year event netted \$393 for the Boys & Girls Club of Warm Springs. Winners of the Poker Run and 50/50 raffle walked away with nice prizes, and several participants received door prizes that were donated by local businesses and individuals.

We send special thanks to the following individuals and businesses that donated time, hard work, items for door prizes and money:

Howard and Angie Rambow; John and Stephanie Parker; Preston Parker; Kip Morris; Bill Stanton; Margie Kalama; Dennis and RaNeve Dowty; Julie from Central Oregon Abate; NAPA Auto Parts (Madras); Oregon Embroidery; the Desert Inn in Metolius; a North End Donor who wishes to remain anonymous; and let's not forget Kah-Nee-Ta and the radio stations that provided us with advertising over the past month!

Sam Douglas, Northwest Cycles, 93 S.E. Trace Street, Madras, OR 97741.

Extra revenue puts safety net on 'life support'

SALEM (AP) — Finally, everything seems to be coming together for Tamara Yallup.

Once a drug addict and drifter, the 33-year-old single mother of three has now held an apartment since Thanksgiving and will soon begin taking classes to become a medical assistant.

This summer, her 13-year-old son will move from his father's place in Warm Springs and her whole family will be reunited for the first time in more than a decade.

Yallup credits some of Oregon's social safety net programs with helping her get her life back on track.

Some of those programs, until this month slated for devastating cuts, are looking to have a slightly more promising future in the next two-year budget thanks to an uptick in anticipated revenue.

"Since I've been through this program I've had a stable living," Yallup said. "My mind's straight and I can think clearly. My kids are doing good, I'm doing good."

State services helped her get a GED diploma and pay her expenses while she learns job skills and prepares for her career.

Rosier projections for tax collections, released in the quarterly revenue forecast May 12, mean lawmakers probably won't have to cut nearly as deeply as they once feared from services for seniors, people with disabili-

ties and low-income families like Yallup's. But advocates warn that some critical programs are still on the chopping block.

"We're going to be able to put most programs back on life support, but they're going to be very fragile even with these add-backs," said Rep. Tina Kotek, a Portland Democrat who co-chairs the budget subcommittee that oversees spending on human services. "We're going to be at the bare minimum."

In February, faced with a dire budget outlook and the loss of millions in federal stimulus dollars, Gov. John Kitzhaber proposed lowering the lifetime maximum for welfare checks from five years to just 18 months—a move that would have given Oregon the nation's shortest lifetime maximum and potentially kicked thousands out of the program before they could become self-sufficient.

Program advocates said the very last threat holding up struggling families, sending parents to the streets and children into foster care

Early in the legislative session budget writers identified the proposed 18-month cap as a key problem to address, and the idea spawned intense opposition from interest groups, religious leaders and was formally condemned by the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF, is

part of the remodeled welfare system approved in 1996 by the Republican Congress and Democratic President Bill Clinton. The overhaul was known as "welfare to work" and designed to give temporary cash assistance, career training and job placement services to families with children until parents could earn a sufficient income to support the family.

"This is a program designed for poor children," said Jessica Chanay, deputy director of Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon. "Whatever decisions get made with TANF are going to have a disproportionate impact on poor children."

The additional revenue means the lifetime max won't be shortened, but other job-training services that Yallup and thousands of others rely on will almost certainly be curtailed, lawmakers said.

Programs still facing significant cuts or outright elimination include:

— The Parents as Scholars program, which helps 1 percent of parents on TANF get a college education that can lead to higher-wage jobs and pull the family out of poverty;

— Post-TANF, which provides small monthly checks to help families transition from TANF into the workforce;

— The JOBS for Oregon's Future program, an employment and training program that serves people both inside and outside of the TANF program;

"When you're competing against a lot of mainstream applicants in an employer's market, it can be challenging," said Tracee Wells, an employment specialist and business services liaison with Portland Community College, which contracts with the state to provide job training and placement services for TANF clients.

The need for temporary cash assistance has ballooned since the Great Recession forced employers to jettison jobs and sent unemployment rates soaring, as high as 11.6 percent in June 2009. In October, more than 29,000 families were in the program, 60 percent more than a year earlier, according to a legislative memo.

Wedding Announcement

It is with joy that we Catherine Bernadette Hamray and Winter Night Selam invite you to share in the celebration of love as we exchange our marriage vows on Saturday, the

eleventh of June, 2011, at 10 o'clock in the morning at the Toppenish Creek Longhouse in White Swan Longhouse grounds, White Swan, Washington. Reception immediately following.

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Wind industry demands grid overload solution

(AP) — The wind energy industry demanded last week that the Bonneville Power Administration fix problems that have forced the shut-off of Northwest wind generators while hydroelectric dams fill the grid with power produced from a heavy spring runoff.

The complaints voiced by the American Wind Energy Association and U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenaucr, D-Ore., at a wind energy conference in Anaheim,

Calif., illustrate the problems green energy faces as it grows and tries to merge into a power system that is not ready to fully exploit it.

The conflict was generated by the highest spring runoff since 1997 in the Columbia Basin, where Bonneville markets power from 31 federally owned hydroelectric dams, providing about a third of the power for the Northwest.

Blumenaucr complained that

Bonneville hasn't done enough yet with \$2 billion in federal stimulus funding to expand transmission lines, and has not adopted solutions identified in a 2007 report for the Northwest Power and Conservation Council on ways to store wind energy at times it is not needed.

He estimated the shut-offs are costing wind power generators millions of dollars at a time when they need help attracting investment to keep growing.

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