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Staff on board, new offices at Teleco

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymo

The exciting thing about something new is the potential for the future. Take the Warm Springs TeleCo, for example.

Danica Greene and Gabriel Walker can tell you about the potential of the teleco. "I love this job," said Walker, who is the sales and marketing coordinator for the enterprise.

"There's a different feeling here than with any other job I've had," he said. "We're connecting the reservation together, and we're connecting the reservation to the rest of the world. I feel blessed to be a part of this."

"It's been exciting to see the office come together," said Danica, "from the remodel, to the new furniture coming in, and now the equipment."

Working at the teleco, "I'm learning new things every day, as we go along," she said.

Greene is the teleco customer service manager. She and Walker are the first teleco employees hired after operations manager Jose Mantanane, who started in April.



WSTC's Gabe Walker, Jose Mantanane and Danica Greene at the new offices.

Dave McMechan/Spilyay

'Best service possible'

The Warm Springs Telecommunications Co. (WSTC) central office is at the industrial park in the former apparel building, which is now completely remodeled.

Technicians this week continue installing the state-of-the-art telecommu-

nications equipment. A key component, called a "soft switch," is going in soon.

Danica Greene comes to the teleco from tribal Mail and Reception, where she was supervisor for ten years. She grew up in Warm Springs, and gradu-

ated high school from Chemawa Indian School.

As teleco customer service manager, her goal is help the enterprise provide the best service possible, the kind of service you would expect from the best

telecommunications companies. "We're here to help the people of the reservation connect to each other and to the outside world," Greene said.

See TELECO on page 8

Council, district considering new school

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymo

Tribal Council and the 509-J school district board have been talking in recent week of the need for a new school in Warm Springs.

The idea for a new school serving the reservation has been on the table for about a decade. Funding has been the obstacle to getting the project beyond the discussion phase.

To build a new K-8 school in Warm Springs would cost an estimated \$18 million, said Rick Molitor, school district superintendent.

An idea mentioned at Tribal Council last week is for the school district to come up with half the money, and the tribes to come up with the other half.

Tribal Council could put the issue to a vote of the membership by referendum. The school district would go to its voters for a bond levy.

The current Warm Springs Elementary School is decades old, some parts dating back to the 1930s. The location by Highway 26 is also problematic for safety and other reasons.

See SCHOOL on page 5

Council hears business development update

Tribal Council last week heard a recommendation from the economic stewardship team on the process for approving business loans to tribal members.

There is a \$2 million fund, called the Private Business Revolving Fund, that is intended to help members start new businesses, or expand or improve existing ones.

The fund is part of the "phase 2 settlement" money that Tribal Council used to fund the Economic Stewardship Plan.

A total of \$10 million was dedicated by Council in 2009 to the plan. Six million was designated for loans to tribal enterprises, and \$2 million for capacity improvements to support business development.

The remaining \$2 million is to be used as a revolving loan fund for private business ventures of tribal members. A question has been the process by which the private business loans can be made.

The economic stewardship team is working with the Central Oregon In-

tergovernmental Council (COIC) on this project.

As stated in the presentation to Council last week, "It is the intent of the Private Business Revolving Fund to sustain the fund by securing return on investment with few if any default loans."

The key point, then, is to maintain the fund in a sustainable way so that it exists into the future, while making the funds available to tribal members who have sound business plans, said Clint Jacks, of the economic stewardship

team.

The Small Business Center provides assistance to tribal members who are developing a business plan. The economic stewardship team also said the Private Business Revolving Fund is a lender that is cooperative with the Credit Enterprise. The proposal from the team is that a Warm Springs lender committee would review applications for private business loans, ensuring that a sound plan exists.

— by Dave McMechan

Chieftain candidates make statements

By Duran Bobb
Spilyay Tymo

Five of the six qualified nominated candidates for the position of Wasco Chief gave short statements at last week's meeting held at the Agency Longhouse.

About 60 Wasco tribal members were present to hear statements of Garland Brunoe, George Clements, Grant Clements Sr, John Katchia Sr, and JR Smith.

Facilitator Charles V. Jackson opened the meeting. "First, we're going to ask each of them to get up and make a presentation to the group. They will tell you why they should be selected as the next chief," he said.

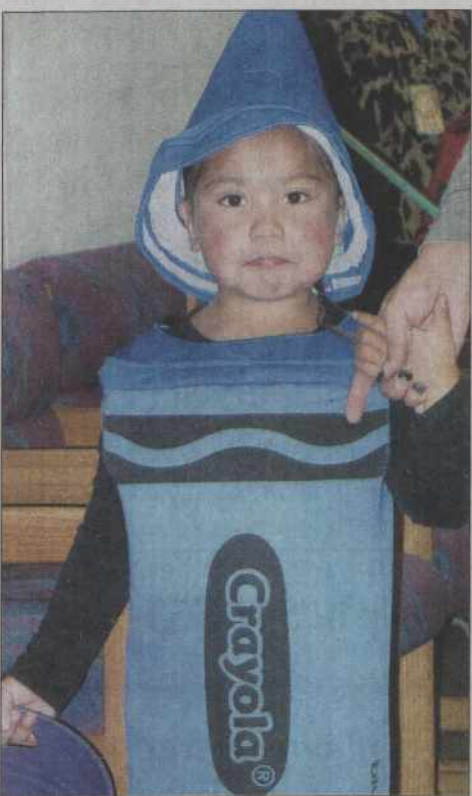
"I left the reservation to serve in the U.S. Army," said Garland Brunoe. "I was in Vietnam in '68-9, and that's where I earned the Purple Heart. I worked for the tribes for about 30 years in various positions, starting with the Credit Department. I moved to Human Resources, and I eventually wound up overseeing the Health Department. I also served seven and a half years as Vice Chair for Tribal Council..."

"What happens on the other side of the world affects us all," Brunoe said. "I learned how tough and protective the government tries to be with our people. Sometimes in the wrong way, and we have to fight. I learned the importance of gathering information from Tribal Council members before pushing for an issue or asking for a decision. I'll often not agree."

See CHIEFTAINSHIP on page 7

Pumpkin Parade

Jaurissa Bellanger (as crayon, below), Jimmy George (as Luigi) and Nakomis Rivera (Spiderman) have fun trick-or-treating on Halloween at the Early Childhood Education Center and Clinic.



Yvonne Iverson photos.