

Early tax clinic on Jan. 21 at COCC Madras

The Partnership to End Poverty and the Warm Springs Community Action Team are offering a Super Saturday of free tax preparation on January 21. The free tax clinic will be held at the Madras COCC campus from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Both federal and state returns will be filed electronically with the help of certified volunteers.

The Partnership and WSCAT's goals are to help Central Oregonians receive a much of a return as they deserve and to keep for themselves.

This includes the savings from the free preparation, increasing the number of people filing and receiving the Earn Income Tax Credit if they qualify, and limiting the number of people applying for high cost refund loan products.

"We know there is a lot of demand to file taxes as soon as the federal government accepts

the returns," states Lonnie James, of the Warm Springs Community Action Team (WSCAT).

"Per their agreement with the IRS, AARP does not let us open the free sites until February 1," James explained, "so this Super Saturday is a great opportunity to get in and get your taxes prepared, and the refunds on the way back to you early with no loan application fee, interest charges or preparation fees like many of the commercial preparers."

Housing Works offers assistance

The Housing Choice Voucher Waitlist, formerly known as the HUD Section 8 Program, will be open through January 13. The program will close at 11:59 p.m. on that date.

Housing Works will be offer-

Appointments are being taken for the Super Saturday Free Tax Preparation Clinic through the Partnership. Call 541-504-1389 for an appointment for the January 21, 2012. Visit www.takecredit.org for more information.

The regular season of free tax clinics offers at the Madras Senior Center and the Warm Springs Small Business Center will open February 1.

For appointments at these locations through April 15, visit www.WarmSpringsProgress.net.

ing technical assistance this Wednesday, Jan. 11 at the Jefferson County Library, 241 SE 7th St, Madras, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Preliminary application: www.waitlistcheck.com

One killed, 2 injured in wreck

A Madras man died, and two Warm Springs women were injured in a single-vehicle mother vehicle accident on Highway 26.

Police are investigating alcohol as a contributing factor in a fatal car crash, which happened Friday, Jan. 6, about three miles north of Madras.

The wreck happened just after 9:30 p.m., when Kathy Ruth Danzuka, 47, reportedly lost control of her pickup on the highway near milepost 113, according to Oregon State Police.

She crossed into the southbound lane and went off the highway into a ditch, according to police.

Danzuka and the two passengers were ejected from the vehicle.



Pickup in single-vehicle wreck.

One of the passengers, Chad Willis Hamilton, 37, of Madras, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Danzuka and a second passenger, Rebecca June Danzuka, 45, were injured and taken to Mountain View Hospital in Madras.

Kathy Danzuka was later taken by AirLife to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend for further treatment of serious injuries. The highway was closed for two hours. State troopers from Madras and Bend are continuing an investigation.

News from Indian Country

Tribes concerned about water, gaming

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Ponka-We Victors, the only American Indian member of the Kansas Legislature, lived on the Tohono O'odham reservation in Arizona several years ago during college.

She remembers when farmers and residents of a nearby town diverted too much of the area's water for irrigation, leaving the tribe parched.

"I'm telling you, that is the most horrible thing to wake up to," Victors said recently. "You can't bathe, you can't cook, you can't really do anything. I felt bad for the elders and the children."

Victors, D-Wichita, said water policy is something that is on the minds of the state's Indian tribes going into the upcoming session.

The Kickapoo nation in Horton has been embroiled in a federal lawsuit for almost five years over the right to build a reservoir that tribal Chairman Steve Cadue said is sorely needed.

"We're in desperate need of water," Cadue said. "Of course, safe drinking water is the main purpose, but it affects our growth and economic development as well. We can't build new houses — we have a waiting list for people to get into the Kickapoo reservation."

Gov. Sam Brownback has said he will push a four-point plan to address water conserva-

tion this session, with an emphasis on renewing the Ogallala Aquifer.

Steve Ortiz (Mon-Wah), tribal chairman of the Prairie Band Potawatomi in Mayetta, said water isn't an issue for his tribe, but draining of aquifers is becoming a problem nationally.

Ortiz was one of about a dozen tribal leaders who met with President Barack Obama earlier this month. One of the issues he said they discussed was water rights.

Cadue, Ortiz and Victors all said Brownback has been receptive to the concerns of the state's tribes since he became governor. They said they appreciated a proclamation he issued in November apologizing to the state's five main tribes for the "spirit of deception" that too often marked dealings with them in the past.

Brownback has also said he doesn't want to discuss expanding state gambling during the coming session, while the state's Democratic leaders have made gaming the funding centerpiece of their jobs proposal.

That doesn't sit well with Ortiz, who said the state shouldn't expand gaming while restricting the tribes to one casino per reservation.

"We're opposed to it, mainly because of the fact that this now would give the state not only four casinos, but they're also

There was some concern among the tribes about the voter identification law the state passed...

talking about two racetracks," Ortiz said. "So that really gives them six gaming operations, which really in return they should allow us to have more gaming operations as tribes without having to pay the state any fee."

Ortiz said he met with Kansas Democratic Party chairwoman Joan Wagnon two months before the jobs proposal was presented and she didn't mention more state gaming as a possibility.

"She just said she could make no commitment about Indian gaming," Ortiz said. "We had no idea this was going in their plan."

Wagnon, via email, said she wasn't aware of the gaming aspect of the proposal at the time she met with Ortiz.

Victors said she didn't have any input on the jobs proposal and hadn't had a chance to talk to the leaders of her party about it.

"But, you know, the No. 1 thing is jobs," Victors said. "Unfortunately, I didn't see a lot of opportunities for making jobs a priority this past session. I was

kind of shocked by that, coming in as a freshman. I thought that all we would talk about was the jobs issue."

Ortiz said there also was some concern among the tribes about the voter identification law the state passed. Ortiz said he was disappointed that tribal identification cards aren't included on the list of approved IDs.

"We're looking for a bill to be introduced into the Kansas Legislature that tribal identification cards be allowed as voter ID," Ortiz said. "Right now we've had meetings with the secretary of state, but I've not seen any Democrat or Republican come forth saying they'd introduce a bill."

Increasing voter turnout on the reservations is on the agenda for Victors, who said she believes she is the first female American Indian in the Legislature.

She said she would like to be a bridge between state and tribal governments, providing her unique perspectives on such things as living on a reservation without clean, abundant water.

"I would really like to see something worked out with that water issue," Victors said. "This is Kansas, and it's the new millennium, you know. There should be something where tribes, reservations and people don't have to wake up to that burden."

Lawmakers oppose planned Broken Arrow casino

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — Oklahoma's two U.S. senators and a U.S. representative are joining the opponents to a planned casino in Broken Arrow by the Kialegee Tribal Town.

U.S. Rep. John Sullivan said that he and Sen. Tom Coburn have sent letters to National Indian Gaming Commission Chairwoman Tracie Stevens and Assistant U.S. Interior Secretary Larry Echo Hawk. Sullivan says the letters ask for the status of

efforts to have land approved for a casino.

And Sen. Jim Inhofe says he doesn't believe the Bureau of Indian Affairs will approve an application for a casino on the land.

Kialegee Tribal Town King Tiger Hobia has said the tribe has no viable economic development opportunities and that the casino is an example of why the Indian Gaming Act was enacted.

Mayor threatens to shut down Duluth casino

DULUTH, Minn. (AP) — The mayor of Duluth is threatening to shut down the local Indian casino if an agreement cannot be reached on revenue sharing.

Mayor Don Ness says a 1986 contract with the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa gives the city authority to halt gambling if the profit-sharing agreement is invalidated.

Ness says banning gambling would be the last resort for the city and says its goal

is to come to an agreement. The Fond du Lac Band stopped sharing profits with the city in 2009.

A federal judge has ruled in favor of ending the payments, but ordered the Fond du Lac to make good on back payments. Both sides have appealed the decision.

Fond du Lac tribal chairwoman Karen Diver tells the Duluth News Tribune the mayor's words promote hatred toward the band.

Totem pole heading to Smithsonian

KINGSTON, Wash. (AP) — A Kingston carver's totem pole is heading to the nation's capital.

The Kitsap Sun reports the Smithsonian Institution has commissioned David Boxley to carve a 22-foot-tall totem pole that will be installed at the National Museum of the American Indian.

Boxley is finishing his 3,000 pound totem this week, and then it will be shipped cross country.

Although his creations have been featured at Disney World, the Microsoft campus and other places, Boxley says having one of his totem poles in the nation's capital is a dream come true.

Appearance of snowy owl puzzling

BEND (AP) — Wildlife scientists are puzzling over the appearance of the snowy owl in Oregon, a bird rarely seen in the state.

The owls are usually found in Alaska or Canada's tundra, where their white feathers serve as camouflage. But in several places across Oregon, including Burns, Astoria, Lincoln City and Eugene.

"That's a significant number of birds that aren't normally found in the state," said Simon Wray, conservation biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in Bend.

Snowy owls have been reported around the northern United States in recent months, said Bob Russell, a

wetland bird biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Minneapolis.

"They are really pouring in," he said.

An online map of reported bird sightings maintained by the Cornell University Lab of Ornithology shows snowy owls in New England, the Midwest and the Western U.S.

The snowy owl can weigh about 4 pounds and has a wingspan of up to 51/2 feet. Oregon birders still remember the 1980s appearance of a juvenile snowy owl in the southern part of the state's Rogue Valley, one of the more notable "accidental" bird sightings in Oregon.

Biologists speculate the bird might be making more southern appearances because of a lack

of food, or perhaps because there are too many young owls in the tundra.

Whatever is causing the phenomenon, it could lead to an increase in Central Oregon owl sightings, Wray said.

Since its arrival in Central Oregon last month, the snowy owl near Burns has drawn birders out to the Harney County town 130 miles east of Bend.

The snowy owl has been seen southeast of town, said Tom Crabtree, a birder from Bend who went out to see and photograph it last month.

"It's been hanging out there," Crabtree said. "It's very cooperative, very photogenic."



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