

Staff on board at Indian Head Casino

By Duran Bobb
Spilyay Tymoo

After two job fairs in recent months, 450 people applied for jobs at the New Indian Head Casino.

In order to operate around the clock, the casino needs a total of 215 employees.

Indian personnel figures show that 107 of the 215 are tribal members. Fifty-three are non-tribal members. Twenty-six are married into the tribe. And 29 are other Native Americans.

"This means that over 75 percent are tribal members, married into the tribes, or other Native Americans," said gaming board chairman Deepak Sehgal.

"A number of casino employees and Kah-Nee-Ta employees transferred to Indian Head Casino," he said, "Only a few positions are left to be filled."

For the time, Kah-Nee-Ta Resort seems a little lonely without the casino. But the staff are very busy getting ready for spring break.

Indian Head Casino general manager Ken Billingsley has been taking time between closing of the casino at Kah-Nee-Ta, and the opening of the new Indian Head Casino.

"He's training the staff in a variety of areas, including customer service," said Sehgal.

"The staff have also been



Casino new hires and transfers participated in team-building exercises at a training workshop at the Community Center.

responsible for much of the labor needed to move the casino equipment and office equipment

to the new casino. They've done a great job."

The dedication of the New

Indian Head Casino will take place on Feb. 4, starting at 1 p.m. and ending at 6 p.m.

All tribal members are invited to the dedication, along with a number of specially invited dig-

The ceremonial ribbon-cutting will take place at about 2:30 p.m., and the doors will then be opened.

nitaries and guests.

"The casino is an adult enterprise venue," said Sehgal. "Everyone over 21 years of age is allowed onto the gaming floor."

The ceremonial ribbon-cutting will take place at about 2:30 p.m., and the doors will then be opened.

"There will be a number of surprises for everyone who attends and stays for refreshments and plays the gaming machines."

Tribal members are welcome to bring their guests. At 6 p.m. the casino will open to the general public. "The casino staff and gaming commission are working extra hard to get the casino ready for the opening date," Sehgal said.

"We have arranged for a large tent for the dedication. Let's hope and pray the weather gets better for the ceremony!"

As for the space left at the resort once the new casino opens, the Kah-Nee-Ta board will be reviewing the options and making decisions in the near future.

Washanaksha grant winners announced

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Cultural Trust Committee has awarded four Washanaksha grants.

One of the grants will help youth who will learn Waskalikt Services following their participation in Sunday Washut service at the Agency Longhouse. The grant, submitted by group instructor Deanie Johnson, helps provide the youth with the chance to learn important cultural songs and dances of the tribes.

Rose Ball received a grant to conduct doll-board classes, and breast-plate work. One of the classes is scheduled for this week at the Early Childhood Education Center. A later class date has not yet been set, Ball said.

Another grant goes toward a cultural exchange between



Rose Ball, Deanie Johnson and Jefferson Greene (not pictured, Suzie Slockish.)

the Confederated Tribes and Clatsop-Nehalem tribes. Warm Springs Canoe Family leader, and Museum at Warm Springs

project developer, Jefferson Greene accepted the grant award for this project.

The Simnasho Heritage

group received a grant to document traditions, language and history of that community, and teach tradition to youth. Suzie Slockish, of the tribal language program, accepted the grant for this project. They plan on doing demonstrations and sharing at the Tygh Valley Fair.

The Washanaksha grants are funded by the Oregon Cultural Trust. The goals are to promote tribal members' understanding of and involvement in cultural activities, traditions, arts, ceremonies, language, dance, history, and music.

The grants help with the passing on of tribal knowledge and practices to youth of the tribal community, and to help youth feel more connected to the tribal culture. Applications are available in the fall and are awarded in Jan.

The next deadline to submit items to the Spilyay Tymoo is Friday, Feb. 3.

Packaging facility considered

By Duran Bobb
Spilyay Tymoo

As much as 20 percent of the salmon in the tribal freezer is lost to freezer burn.

Tribal Council vice-chairman Ron Suppah may have found a solution to the problem, when he was introduced to Mark Whitham.

Councilman Suppah met Whitham through a contact at the Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission. Whitham is a seafood specialist with Oregon Sea Grant Extension.

Suppah and other representatives of the tribes visited the seafood development lab at the OSU Experiment Station in Astoria to learn from Whitham advanced preservation methods.

"Grant funding applications were submitted in the past two years," secretary-treasurer Jody

Calica said. "The last one was close, but not funded. The USDA wanted us to submit a planning grant application to assess doing a phased fish/sea food and meat processing facility. We will try again."

The proposed facility on the reservation would use retort pouches to preserve traditional foods. There is even talk of packaging Chinook salmon for sale off the reservation.

"Taking care of our fish right away is very important," Fish and Wildlife Committee Chairman Bruce Jim said. "The meat could be vacuum-sealed and then frozen. Then when we need them, we have them. That can save a lot."

Jim said the product could be used to teach tribal members the traditional way of making powdered salmon. "We could teach the classes on how to dry, can and everything else. There could be

a certain amount of salmon set aside for tribal canning alone. There could be salmon canned for such things as the senior program, funerals, name-givings. That's how important this food processing plant is."

In time, Jim said, more foods could be incorporated such as roots and berries.

The Fish and Wildlife Committee held discussions last week with Whitham to go over a wish list and the different scenarios of the proposed plant.

One idea is a 2400 square foot facility, enclosing the equipment to the existing freezer. Another proposal was to utilize the existing building for hanging game and designing an entirely new building. There is also talk of including a teaching area and a more traditional smoking house to be added later. The proposed packaging facility could create as many as 18 jobs.

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