

Rich history of Lincoln's Birthday Powwow

By Duran Bobb
Spilyay Tymoo

Earlier this month, members of numerous tribes gathered at the Simnasho Longhouse for the Thirty-Fourth Annual Lincoln's Birthday Powwow.

There is a rich history behind the celebration that stretches back to the days of the atwai Nettie Shawaway, Sylvia Wallulatam, Matilda Mitchell and Herb Stwyer Sr.

The celebration began as a simple social gathering, Mackie Begay told KWSO's Marge Kalama in a recent interview. Through the years, the celebration has focused on children, veterans, elders, and recovery from drugs and alcohol.

"The elders raised funds all year for the powwow," Aurolyn Stwyer-Pinkham recalls. "Every year, my pusha [grandfather] donated a cow to feed the people. Everyone brought food. A visiting elder was usually honored with gifts and a traditional give-away."

The celebration became an annual event without a name until the atwai Stwyer, while serving on tribal council, traveled to Washington, D.C.

While touring the national monuments, the atwai became intrigued with the history of Abraham Lincoln.



Dancers at this year's Lincoln's Birthday Powwow.

Born on February 12, 1809, Lincoln was reared in a poor frontier family. Self-educated, he went on to become a lawyer and served a term in the House of Representatives. At the age of 51, he secured the Republican nomination for presidency.

When the southern states declared their secession to form the Confederacy, Lincoln held the Union together and prevented British recognition in the territory. In 1863, he signed the Emancipation Proclamation,

passing the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery.

Six days after General Robert E. Lee surrendered in the south, Lincoln became the first president to be assassinated. Ten years after Warm Springs became an Indian reservation, John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln at Ford's Theater.

"It was atwai Herb Stwyer Sr. who gave the powwow its name," Stwyer-Pinkham said. "Keep in mind that back in those times

our elders maintained a strong culture of humility, compassion, kindness and generosity."

"One of my favorite memories was when Whipman Oliver Kirk led my boys—Josiah and Curtis—onto the dance floor," Sarah Frank said. "It was also the year my little sister, Eileen, was crowned Miss Lincoln's. My mom just had surgery, but she joined them on the floor. It was amazing."

In an interview with William Robbins, atwai Rudy Clements explained that these types of celebrations are crucial to tradition. "It preserves our tribal Indian ways, all aspects—in the best way we can. It shows pride in ourselves, family, and in the children especially. We show pride in our seniors, veterans, people who have turned their lives around and become alcohol free. We express our self-governance and our sovereignty."

The celebration takes place every second week in February.

"Mark your calendars and spread the word," Mackie Begay said. "We put all this together in one little building. There's 500 to 600 people jammed in there, so show up on time, or you're going to be late."

Some guests at the powwow this year traveled from as far away as Manitoba, Canada.

Wash. Court upholds tribal fishing rights

(AP) — Washington state wildlife authorities had no right to cite a Yakama Nation fisherman for catching undersized fish at a Columbia River tribal fishing site, the Washington Supreme Court ruled last week in a split decision.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs had filed a brief in the case, supporting of the fisherman.

The case stems from a 2008 citation at the Maryhill Treaty Fishing Access Site, one of several sites set aside by Congress exclusively for five Northwest tribes to exercise their treaty fishing rights.

The state had argued it rightfully assumed criminal jurisdiction there, but the high court disagreed in a 6-3 decision from Olympia, Wash.

"The state lacks criminal jurisdiction at Maryhill because the treaty fishing access site is tribal land, established and reserved by Congress for the exclusive use of tribal members," the court wrote.

In 1998, Congress established several fishing sites along the Columbia River to replace accustomed tribal fishing areas that had been previously guaranteed by treaty but were destroyed by dams.

At the Maryhill site, state wildlife officials cited Lester Ray Jim, an enrolled Yakama,

on June 25, 2008 for unlawfully retaining undersized sturgeon.

Jim caught five undersized sturgeon in his gill net while fishing commercially from the Maryhill site, and said he planned to follow tribal practice and release the live fish to the river from shore.

Sturgeon can survive out of water for several hours.

Both state and tribal laws bar fishermen from retaining undersized sturgeon, but only state law requires that the unauthorized fish be returned to the water immediately.

Jim filed a motion in Klickitat County District Court, challenging the state's jurisdiction to prosecute him. The court dismissed the case, and the state appealed. Higher courts alternately ruled in both sides' favor, with the state ultimately appealing a Washington state Court of Appeals ruling to the high court. Three justices dissented.

Creation of an Indian reservation must be "more purposeful" than simply authorizing the Army to purchase sites and improve them for fishing access, Justice Charles K. Wiggins wrote.

With Warm Springs, the Nez Perce, Umatilla and Colville tribes, all of which also have rights to fish at those sites, filed briefs in support of the Yakama case.

Meetings set on 2012 KNT salmon bake season

The annual pre-season meetings for the 2012 Kah-Nee-Ta salmon bake are coming up.

There will be a meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 10 a.m.; and another on Saturday, March 3 at 9 a.m. The meetings will be in the HeHe Room at the resort.

Cooks, dancers and drummers are invited.

Interested tribal members must attend one of the scheduled meetings to discuss requirements and complete appropriate paperwork in order to be included in the 2012 salmon bake season.

For more information, please call Heather Cody, convention services coordinator, at 541-553-1112 ext. 3436.

Invitation

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs is extending an invitation to attend the **Twenty-Second Honor Seniors Day on May 11 at the Agency Longhouse.**

For information, contact the Senior Citizens Dept., PO Box C, Warm Springs, OR 97761.

You can also call the office at 541-553-3313, or 553-3520, or 553-3390.

Lodging available at Kah-Nee-Ta, 1-800-554-4786. Senior staff email: paiutewewa@yahoo.com

Tribes receive Housing grant

The Warm Springs Housing Authority has received a grant of more than \$1.5 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Seven other tribes in Oregon received Indian Housing Block

Grants, which totaled almost \$14 million. The money will go toward housing development, housing services, crime prevention and safety, and other programs that help solve affordable housing problems.

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School Bond Update

Last month a community facilities planning committee came together with a goal to improve our school facilities while maintaining the current yearly tax rate. The committee met this goal with a proposed school bond recommendation that was accepted by the school board on January 30th. On February 13th, the school board approved the \$26.7 million school bond. On May 15th, Jefferson County voter ballots are due by mail and a Warm Springs referendum vote will take place.

If passed by local voters, the school bond will fund new school buildings and upgrades to existing buildings and athletic facilities in our district.

- Half of a new school building in Warm Springs (remaining half to be funded by the Confederate Tribes of Warm Springs);
- An auditorium/performing arts center at Madras High School for use by the entire district and community;
- Upgrades to all of the school buildings to enhance safety, save energy and improve efficiency to reduce future operating costs; and
- Upgrades and improvements to district-wide athletic facilities.

Music For Our Schools!

This current school year, Ethos Music Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of music and music-based education for youth in rural communities, sent three talented music teachers to our school district. They have been providing singing and music education to our students.

Here are a few highlights from our Ethos program:

Oregon Trail Family Night

Ethos Music Teacher Laurel Crafton recently partnered with Buff Intermediate to host an Oregon Trail Family Night on February 9th. More than 250 students and family members came to celebrate with pioneer songs, dances, games and crafts. They made yarn dolls and whirligigs, and experienced Oregon Trail stories brought to life in movies and computer games. Families enjoyed rice pudding and cornbread provided by OSU extension nutrition services. They also dressed up as pioneers and had their pictures taken.

Winter Concerts

This month, Ethos Music Teacher Blythe Olson partnered with Metolius Elementary to host two Winter Concerts that brought in more than 400 friends and family members. Olson has been working to make sure that each classroom enjoys 30 minutes of music education, two times a week. She also offers private music lessons afterschool.

Warm Springs Elementary

On February 24, Blythe Olson will be heading to Warm Springs to share music with our WSE students for the remainder of the year.

Winter concerts brought in more than 400 friends and family members.

Calendar

February

2/27 School Board Meets: 7 p.m. School Services Building

March

3/5 Late Start, 2 hour delay

3/19 Late Start, 2 hour delay

3/26-3/30 Spring Break

Jefferson County School District ■ 445 SE Buff Street, Madras, OR 97741 ■ (541) 475-6192 ■ www.jcsd.k12.or.us