



Spilyay Tymoo

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School measure prompts registration drive

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The deadline to register to vote in the upcoming May county election is April 24.

The May 15 ballot includes the school district bond measure that would fund half of the construction cost of a new k-8 school in Warm Springs. Tribal leaders are encouraging members 18 and over to register by the deadline, if they have not done so already.

As of earlier this week, there were 778 registered voters in Jefferson County precinct 14, which includes the 509-J school district area of the reservation. The number of voters in the county overall is 9,412; so the reservation voters clearly could make a significant difference in the election.

One of the easiest ways to register to vote is to go to the website: Oregonvotes.org.



Proposed site of the new school, at East Tenino and Chukkar.

A person could also mail in the registration form, or visit the county clerk's office in Madras.

The clerk's office is expecting to mail the ballots for the May 15 election by April 27.

The proposed school bond would raise a total of \$26.7 million. This

would fund a variety of district improvements, including a performing arts center in Madras. The single-largest item could be the Warm Springs school, which would cost of a total of \$18-20 million.

The bond would cover half the cost, and the tribes would pay for the rest.

At the same time as the county election, the tribes are planning a referendum of the membership regarding the school proposal. To vote in the referendum, a member must be 21 or over, or married.

The idea for a new school serving Warm Springs students has been discussed for several years. The current Warm Springs Elementary School is housed in former BIA buildings, some dating back to the 1930s. The location by the highway is also an issue. For middle school students, a local school would greatly reduce the commute to and from school.

The school district bond proposal would result in no overall tax increase for property owners in the district. This is true because the bond that funded construction of the Jefferson County Middle School is nearly paid.

New fishing access site opening

The Columbia River tribes and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission are hosting a ceremony in April to open a treaty fishing access site.

The site is at Dallesport, in Klickitat County, Washington. The Corps of Engineers and the BIA will join the tribes and CRITFC at the opening ceremony, set for Wednesday, April 25.

The Corps of Engineers was required by law to acquire, develop and transfer lands on the Columbia River, to be used traditional fishing by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Yakama Nation, The Nez Perce, and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation.

The Dallesport site includes marine structures such as a boat ramp and floating boat dock, access road, fish cleaning station, campground facilities, among other improvements.

The ceremonies on April 25 begin at 10 a.m. with the opening prayer. Speakers include representatives of the treaty tribes, including Warm Springs Chief Delvis Heath, who has been part of the Dallesport access site project since its inception.

Other speakers include Stanley Speaks, BIA regional director; the CRITFC executive director; and the Portland District engineer of the Corps of Engineers.

Following the speakers, there will be a presentation of the Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access Sites Map. There are framed maps for each of the tribes.

Veterans and families at HeHe in April

The Veterans and Family Healing Circle Gathering will be held Thursday-Sunday, April 26-29 at the HeHe Longhouse.

On Thursday, the longhouse will open at noon for travelers, music and storytelling. Friday, there will be a lighting of the healing fire, veterans honoring, flute playing, healing touch and sweat lodge.

Saturday, will feature speakers, ceremonies, a talking circle, sweat lodge, silent auction and raffle. Sunday will be a closing ceremony at 10 a.m. For more information call Larson Kalama Sr. 541-553-3093.

Colorful Scene at Casino



Courtesy of Indian Head Casino.

There are serious restrictions that apply to taking photographs inside casinos. Security personnel will confiscate a camera from someone taking unauthorized pictures inside the building. There are a variety of reasons for this restriction. One reason is that

some of the people at the machines may not want their picture taken, and their privacy must be respected, said Indian Head general manager Ken Billingsley. The picture above is a properly authorized photograph, showing the colorful interior design of Indian Head Casino.

Tribes mourn loss of elder

Councilwoman was fluent in Sahaptin

Warm Springs tribal elder, Bernice T. Mitchell passed away over the weekend.

Bernice began serving on Tribal Council in 1955, when she replaced James Palmer. She then went on to serve eight more terms spanning 25 years.

Bernice also taught Head Start while the program was located at the Community Center.

Fluent in the Indian language, Bernice said in an interview last year, "I belong to the Sahaptin language people. The Sahaptins were one of

the tribes that were brought here from the Columbia River."

Bernice was one of the singers on the album, *Songs of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation*. Others singing included Ellen Squiemphen, Susan Moses, Ada Sooksoit and Adeline Miller. The album was released by Canyon Records in 1975.

Bernice said many people stayed with her family to learn the Indian language.

"It was fun to teach," she said in the interview. "They'd say it so different than us. We'd say it over and over again. When we went to school, we had to leave that at home."

Bernice remembered during the boarding school days how difficult it

was to keep the language.

"We'd get full of demerits and have to clean our school house all the time," she said. "That's how they tried real hard to get rid of our language."

During the boarding school days, Bernice remembered outbreaks of tuberculosis and smallpox.

"First thing they got rid of was the cover sets on the beds. They burned them all up. But we made it throughout that winter. Now we get a little snow and a hard wind blowing and we freeze. This whole world just turns over and over—and changes. That's what our old people say."

— by Duran Bobb

Gearing up for fire season

Weather conditions this winter and spring could result in a busy fire season in the region. "We're thinking it could get hectic," said Robert Medina, dispatcher at Warm Springs Fire Management.

There has been rain in recent weeks, he said, but conditions earlier were dryer than usual.

The region saw about 85 percent of its usual snow- and rainfall, according to a recent irrigation district report.

The most recent fire season on the reservation, specifically August-September 2011, was one of the busiest in recent years. Over 100,000 acres burned on the reservation in the Cascade Complex fires.

Luther Clements at Fire Management is organizing an emergency fire crew that will be prepared to respond

to summer wild-land fires. This would be a supplement to the existing agencies and crews.

Meanwhile, the fire camp crew training courses at Fire Management are coming up at the end of this month. Crew supervisors can contact Medina or William Wilson, assistant Fire Management officer, 541-553-1146.

"We're hoping to hear from the supervisors a week before the training," said Medina, "so we have an idea of how many crews we might have."

Anyone interested in working on the emergency crew can contact Clements at the phone number above.

The camp crew training this year includes a physical fitness program. Participants will be required to take a three-mile pack test before taking the classroom part of the training.