



Spilyay Tymoo

Coyote News, est. 1976

July 25, 2012 Vol. 37, No. 1

July - Pat'ak-Pt'akni - Summer - Snatm

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Tribes, district break ground on new school

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

The twenty acres are now sagebrush and juniper. But in the near future, "We'll look on this site and see a new school for our young people," said Laurie Danzuka, chairwoman of the School District 509-J board.

"Our kids deserve this," she said. "It's been a long-time coming."

The passage on July 10 of the Warm Springs school referendum, Danzuka said, "was a momentous occasion for the tribes, and I want to thank the people of Warm Springs."

Danzuka spoke during the ground-breaking ceremony last week at the new Warm Springs school site, at East Tenino and Chukar Road. The \$20-million k-8 school will open for the fall term in 2014.



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

"I truly believe this will benefit our children," said Councilwoman Lola Sohapp. "I can see so many opportunities coming from this for our children."

Middle school students will spend less time on the bus, she said, giving them more time to spend at school, at school sports and with family. Elementary school students will have a new school in a better location, she said.

Lola and husband Don Sohapp gave the invocation at the ground breaking.

"I also want to thank the voters," said tribal secretary-treasurer Jody Calica, adding too that the school has been a long time coming.

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Students and tribal leaders break ground during a ceremony at the new school building site.

Many jobs with restoration program

The phase 2 settlement money is being put to good use in two ways.

First, the settlement money is being used for important natural resources restoration work.

And second, the phase 2 money is being used for significant employment among tribal members.

The tribes received the phase 2 settlement in 2009. This was compensation from the federal government for past mismanagement of tribal natural resources. About \$29 million of the phase 2 settlement was dedicated to natural resource restoration work. Another roughly \$5 million was designated for baseline studies of natural resources.

There are now about 100 crew members working on restoration projects made possible through this program, administered by the Branch of Natural Resources.

Nearly all of the crew members are tribal members, with a few exceptions in cases of people married into the tribe who are supporting tribal member children.

Last year, between 60 and 65 members were employed in restoration work through the settlement fund. This year the number is higher by 40 employees, as Tribal Council directed that crews be increased to help during the hard economic times.

Some of the crews are working in high country on huckleberry habitat restoration, through reduction of competing vegetation. Some crews are doing trail restoration work.

Others are working on forest health projects such as hazard fuel reduction, which eventually would allow for under-burn forest treatment. Other are working on rebuilding fencing, and removal of noxious weeds.

The crews start their work day early in the morning, gathering before 6 a.m. at Natural Resources. They can then work a full day before the full heat of the afternoon.

— Dave McMechan

Fisher's Expo on Friday

The Columbia River Indian Fisher's Expo is this Friday, July 27 at Hood River. The expo is sponsored by the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

The event and meals are free for all Warm Springs, Yakama, Umatilla and Nez Perce fishers.

The expo is from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Best Western Hood River Inn.

A new feature this year will be the School of Fish, stations for kids 7 and up to learn about salmon, fishing safety and science. For more information call 503-238-0667.

Summer powwow at Simnasho

The Simnasho community is hosting the Hot Summer Night Powwow this evening, July 25.

There will be a fun run and walk in addition to the powwow. The Fun

Run is at 10:30 a.m. starting at the powwow grounds. A potluck barbecue dinner begins at 6, social dancing and singing at 7. Drummers, please bring your own chairs.

Roots tradition lives through family dedication

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

Margaret Suppah and her family gathered the camas roots about two weeks ago at Pop'xle Meadow.

Pop'xle, meaning "powdery," refers to the kind of light sandy soil in the meadow, said Margaret. In the winter, she said, the meadow becomes a shallow lake, and in the summer the ground is ideal for camas roots.

The family gathered the roots for about a week earlier this month. They would start early in the morning, before breakfast, in order to dig as many as possible before the day became too hot.

With camas roots they gather when the plant is in bloom with a purple flower. This is important because there is another variety with a white flower that



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

Margaret Suppah cleans the camas roots before cooking.

is poisonous. Once the plants are no longer blooming they appear identical, so it is critical to gather

when the flowers are in bloom.

When the family was done gathering, they brought the roots to their

camp at Log Springs.

Cleaning the roots took a few days. Gathering the various plant leaves, used in the traditional cooking method, took another couple of days.

Cooking the roots—in a pit with heated rocks and fire on top—took another three and a half days. In all, "You have to give yourself to the roots for about two weeks," said Cassimera Rhoan, who this year is learning the tradition.

Margaret Suppah, as the elder, is teaching the tradition to the family, said Wanda Van Pelt.

Margaret learned the tradition from her atwai aunt Annie Yahtin. From earlier elders there are accounts of many root gatherers at Pop'xle Meadow. These accounts are from the early 1900s.

"There would be camps all through the meadows where the roots are gathered," Wanda said.

These days, only a precious few continue the tradition. This year

Margaret and her family were the only ones who camped at the meadow for camas root-gathering.

A later harvest

The family has noticed an invasive weed growing in the meadow, wreaking some of the root areas.

The weed first appeared several years ago, Margaret said. An earlier effort to burn it was helpful for a while but the weed is spreading again.

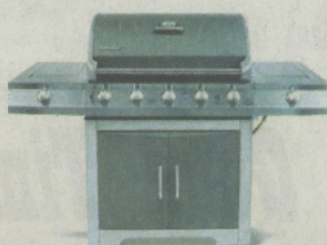
The camas roots were ready for gathering later in the summer than in earlier times, a trend the family has noticed over the past few years, said Wanda. This year the roots were ready about a month later than usual.

But, she said, it was a good year for the camas roots, and the family gathered a great many of them.

See **ROOTS TRADITION** on 10

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