

Letters to the Editor

Thoughts at election time

by Yvonne Iverson

It is a critical time of year for Warm Springs, a time to have our voices heard on issues that affect the Tribes.

I got my ballot in the mail and have been putting off completing it because there are several things that I wanted to know more about.

Spilyay Speaks

At first read, Measure 81 seems to be favorable for Tribes. It would ban the use of gillnets by non-tribal fishermen. After looking into it, and checking the CRITFC website, I see that tribes are opposed to Measure 81.

A statement issued by the Warm Springs, Umatilla, Yakama, and Nez Perce tribes reads, "We oppose Measure 81 because it is the wrong approach to salmon restoration.

All Oregonians should be working together to improve salmon runs, not trying to put each other out of business."

Other measures that have been on the ballot before, and Tribes have opposed, are Measure 82 and 83. These would allow private non-tribal casinos, and specifically a casino at the old Greyhound Racetrack location in Wood Village.

A local item is a five-year increase to Jefferson County property taxes to support the operation of the Madras Aquatics Center.

The tax increase would not affect those living in Warm Springs, but during these hard economic times it would be hard to ask anyone to pay more.

My thought is that if we are going to ask our neighbors to support the MAC, we should be willing support them as well by purchasing a membership.

Many measures to decide on, and don't forget the President and state positions we are voting for.

Happy voting everyone. I will be dropping my ballot at the drop box in front of the Fire & Safety house this afternoon.

If you have questions or have not received your ballot yet, you can call the call the County Elections Office at 541-475-4451.

To museum

Many thanks to the Museum at Warm Springs for all the work before the art event happened. All the work displayed is wonderful to view. Thanks for allowing me to be a part of this artist display.

Terry Courtney Sr.

Hatchery fish

Everyone enrolled into this Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs should take special heed to the article printed in the Spilyay Tymoo, Oct. 17, 2012. This article proves that there is no real difference between the wild or hatchery salmon, the only difference is the hatchery salmon are missing the adipose fin.

Everyone in the Pacific Northwest is or has been brainwashed into believing hatchery fish are inferior. Our ancestors lives' depended on the salmon forever. We, as descendants, must protect our most sacred food, the salmon.

I worked on a salmon recovery plan from 2000-2012. The salmon needs all of us to survive into the future. Tribal Council, you must act on this plan. Here is your proof.

Terry Courtney Sr.

To Veterans

Veterans, the Central Oregon Commissioned Officers invites you to join them on Wednesday, Nov. 11 at the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center.

The meeting will be in the pod A at 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. There will be an Italian-themed lunch in honor of your service and in celebration of Veterans Day.

We will be serving spaghetti and meatballs, lasagna, salad and other goodies. Please come join us and allow us to thank you for your service.

Missing dog

On October 18 our family pet dog came up missing from our home at Sunnyside Drive in Warm Springs.

Description: female, less than 1 year old, weight around 40 to 50 pounds, pure white German Sheppard.

She had on a pink dog collar, very easy to spot out, if you've seen this dog please return her to 6331 Sunnyside

Drive, Warm Springs.

I am offering a \$50 reward for her return (no questions asked). Thank you.

Tony and SeeGrey Littleleaf, 541-325-2062.

An apology

As I write this letter to you, I have been sober for 74 days. I continue my program to learn and live my life away from alcohol.

I want to now apologize to the community of Warm Springs and especially the passengers of the car I was driving while under the influence. I know now of the great danger that could have happened to us all. Again I am sorry.

Mario Smith

B&G Club

We would like to thank some individuals who donated items over the past few months to the Warm Springs Boys and Girls Club.

We really appreciate the generosity and your thoughtfulness for the kids. Thank you Fire Management, and Gorkey Mitchell and crew for the donation and delivery of bottled water, Gatorade, fruit and snacks for the kids.

Also, thank you Shawneeta Yahtin for donating bottled water and fruit. Your donations were very helpful and we truly appreciate it! **June A. Smith**, club director.

Trick-or-Treat!



Artist Travis Bobb everyone is looking forward to another scary Halloween in Warm Springs.

Warm Springs Telecom story of success

It is my honor to nominate Warm Springs Telecom for Excellence in the Telecommunications Partnerships.

Warm Springs Telecom is the wholly owned tribal telecom of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the largest Native reservation (by land area) in the State of Oregon, and home to the Warm Springs, Paiute and Wasco Tribes.

Warm Springs Telecom was created to provide tribally-owned "improved access, reliability and affordability" for these tribal nations.

The tribes were previously neglected and underserved by incumbent telecommunications providers for many years, leaving more than one-third of the population without basic telephone service and very limited broadband or even basic dial-up Internet access.

Warm Springs Telecom is a separate business enterprise of the tribes. With its own board and staff, it is truly a partnership among the tribes and this new enterprise that was created to serve this community.

Warm Springs Telecom is only the ninth tribal telco in the U.S., out of more than 500 U.S.-recognized tribes. I believe that Warm Springs Telecom will become a model for tribal governments throughout the U.S.

Roughly ten years ago, the leadership of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs realized that their community severely lacked telecommunication services.

Tribal leaders commissioned an assessment of the community's needs and for-

mulated a strategic plan, which identified the urgent need for advanced telecommunications services and the capabilities needed to upgrade services on tribal land.

Working with Portland-based consultants Converge Communications, the enterprise began by successfully obtaining funding from Rural Utility Service and Economic Development Administration, to fund planning and early implementation strategies.

Initially Warm Springs Ventures, under the direction of chief operations officer Jeffrey Anspach, persevered in this process, and were rewarded two summers ago, when they received an ARRA Broadband Stimulus Award of \$5.6 million.

The funding has been used as catalytic funding to enable the start-up toward build-out of critical facilities under the auspices of this new tribal enterprise.

Since receiving the award, Warm Springs Telecom has hired 10 staff, more than half from the reservation, built a new central office facility and switching point, installed essential state of the art telecom equipment.

The equipment includes a sophisticated metaswitch, built out their broadband fiber/wireless network to about 60 percent of the reservation as of August 2012 and presently have 250 customers.

Under the prior incumbent telephone operator, only 12 customers had previously been identified to receive federal Lifeline telephone support on the Warm Springs reser-

Warm Springs Telecom is already a phenomenal and very little known Oregon telecommunications success story.

vation. (Lifeline enables households below the poverty line to obtain telephone service at low rates through federal Universal Service funds). Now nearly 80 percent of Warm Springs customers are lifeline customers, receiving essential basic telephone services for only \$1/month, many for the first time.

The launch of Warm Springs Telecom (the ribbon-cutting took place at central office on January 27, 2012) is an under-reported telecom story of grassroots empowerment and Oregon innovation, where an underserved community has stepped up with help from federal resources, dedicated consultants, and the ingenuity of Native peoples to begin bringing state of the art services by, for and to Oregon's largest and most under-served Native reservation.

Phone service is a lifeline and as such, Warm Springs Telecom not only hooks people up to essential services, but supplies each customer with a wireline telephone, so two-way emergency communications for individuals and households can be effectively delivered throughout the Warm Springs area by the tribes. It is also hoped that the 21st century communications and broadband will

jump-start businesses and long overdue economic opportunities for the Warm Springs nations.

I recently visited Warm Springs and saw for myself what Warm Springs Telecom has done, is doing, and has planned for the future.

Warm Springs Telecom is actively committed to building out the network to every person on the reservation—bringing advanced telecommunications services to households many of which previously did not even have a telephone.

This is an amazing and phenomenal accomplishment.

Finally, though current funding doesn't yet allow Warm Springs Telecom to build out an entire redundant fiber network, the intent in the future is to do exactly that—and continue to seek funding to eventually build out the entire network.

Warm Springs Telecom is already a phenomenal and very little known Oregon telecommunications (and Oregon Connections) success story—a story which would not have been possible without the tribes, government, and creative Oregon consultants all working together for a period of years to make it happen.

For all these reasons, I believe Warm Springs Telecom is very deserving of an Oregon Connections Award for Excellence in Telecommunications Partnerships.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Henry, Manager, Office of Community Technology and Staff Director, Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission, Portland.

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