



Spilyay Tymoo

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Casino board presents development ideas

The tribal gaming board and staff gave Tribal Council a report on three proposed development and improvement projects.

One of the ideas is to expand Indian Head Casino with an entertainment and Bingo hall. The addition would be to the side of the building where the security desk is currently located.

The addition would be from 15,000 to 20,000 square feet. The addition would be fairly easy to accomplish, as the utility hook-ups are in place for expansion, said Harold Baugus, Indian Head general manager.

The addition would cost about \$4.5 million, and would be a great improvement to the casino, Baugus said.

Bingo would be a popular added attraction, and the casino could host bigger name entertainers year-round, he said. The new room could be used for a variety other uses as well.

Gaming enterprises have to see improvements to continue attracting customers, Baugus said. "We've



The entertainment-Bingo room would be to the left. Courtesy Indian Head Casino.

done well over the last year, but at some point we'll level out." The casino, he said, "has to be continuously enhanced."

The gaming board and staff have been studying this idea for several months, and recommended approval, said board chair Jason Smith.

The entertainment-Bingo hall expansion would give a good return

on the investment, especially after year five, when the loan is paid off, according to the market research.

The gaming board also presented a proposal to develop a truck stop/convenience store at the tribal property located at the Madras industrial park. This 10-acre site is currently not being used for any productive purpose.

The proposed development

would also include a restaurant. Other tribes operate these kinds of businesses, and have seen success.

The market research for a truck stop-convenience store shows great potential for a profitable enterprise, Baugus said. There would be revenue to the tribes, plus about 60 new jobs for tribal members.

There are about 1,000 people who travel through the Madras industrial park five days a week. This customer base would be in addition to the thousands of vehicles that pass by the site on Highway 26.

The idea is locate class II gaming machines from Kah-Nee-Ta at the truck stop.

The third proposal by the board is to invest in renovations at Kah-Nee-Ta, which has not seen upgrades in 12 years.

The improvements are needed to make the resort competitive with other resorts in Central Oregon.

Pageant on Dec. 30

The Miss Warm Springs Pageant is coming up on the evening of Tuesday, Dec. 30. The Pageant is held at the Agency Longhouse.

The Tribal Council staff organize the Miss Warm Springs Pageant. If you have questions, please call Minnie Yahtin or Emily Yazzie at 541-553-3257.

The Miss Warm Springs contestants are judged on their knowledge of the Confederated Tribes and the reservation; and knowledge of traditional foods, ceremonies, clothing, crafts and social activities.

The judges also look for poise, personality and beauty, speaking ability and appearance. Contestants are asked to perform two tribal dances. They are asked to type essays on "Why I want to be Miss Warm Springs," and "What will be my civic project for the community during my reign?"

A table will be available at the pageant to showcase personal talents, academic and sports achievements, as well as traditional.

Title VII report looks at district performance

The Jefferson County School District 509-J in December released an evaluation report of the district Title VII Indian Education Program.

The report evaluates some of the district goals regarding the 975 Native American students in the district schools.

The goal of reducing the absentee rate has not been met during the 2013-14 school year, according to the report.

The overall absenteeism rate for Native American students in grades 7-12 increased from 12.4 percent to 14.4 percent in 2013-14. The rate refers to the percentage of school days missed.

Absenteeism increased most for seniors, from 14.2 percent in 2012-13 to 19.6 percent in 2013-14.

Grade 9 absenteeism decreased from 16.9 percent to 12.6 percent. Grade 11 absenteeism decreased slightly, from 15.5 to 15.3 percent. Other grades saw increases in absenteeism.

The goal of reducing the drop-out rate among Native American students showed progress in 2013-14.

The annual drop-out rate for the Native American in 2013 for grades 9-12 was 8 percent, lower than the prior year rate of 17 percent. However, the drop-out rate for juniors

increased from 12 to 16 percent during this time.

The long-term trend is toward a lower drop-out rate among the Native American students.

The report looks at how Native American students in the school district are doing in areas of reading and mathematics.

There are mixed results with this goal. For instance, "Over the past five years, district data indicate a declining percentage of Native American students in grades 3 and 5 meeting reading and math proficiency standards."

On the other hand, "district data also indicate an increasing percent-

age of Native American students in grades 8 and 11 meeting reading and math proficiency stands."

The evaluation looks at the proficiency of students in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11. "Proficiency rates at the elementary level showed improvement across reading and math assessments, while proficiency rates at the middle and high school levels all decreased."

A draft of the report was presented at the 590-J Impact Aid hearing in Warm Springs earlier this month.

Simnasho to ring in New Year

The Simnasho New Year's Eve Celebration and Powwow will start with potluck at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 31.

Washat starts at 7 and traditional powwow, social dancing and games start at 7:30.

Specials are Mother and Baby in Baby Board Recognition, Men's Round Bustle, and Musical Bench Championship of the World. The Clown Dance contest is at 11 p.m. Cash prize for first, second and third. Midnight: time to welcome the New Year with song and lay new footprints around the longhouse.

For more information contact Captain, 541-553-7014.

Eagle Academy opening the big story of 2014

The year 2014 saw construction of a large-scale fish restoration project on Mill Creek, at Potter's Ponds. This project will restore fish habitat that was destroyed in the 1940s, when Warm Springs Lumber Co. built two large log ponds on Mill Creek.

The reservation in 2014 again saw an active fire season, with lightning-caused wild fires breaking out at roughly the same time on opposite sides of the reservation.

The Warm Springs Canoe Family made the journey to Bella Bella, British Columbia. The family partnered this year with the Nisqually tribal canoe family.

Range and Ag continued a program that has removed thousands of unclaimed horses from the reservation. And Warm Springs received good news from the Federal



Students who ride the bus arrive at school. Buses pick up kids who live more than a mile from the academy. Dave McMechan/Spilyay

Aviation Administration, approving the reservation as a test-site for unmanned aerial vehicles. Kah-Nee-Ta wrapped up a \$1.5 million repair project, necessary due to a kitchen fire last year.

The big development in 2014, though, was the opening of the Warm Springs k-9 Eagle Academy.

This was the culmination of a dream that many residents have had for the past few decades.

Tribal members in 2013 approved a referendum allowing the Confederated Tribes to fund half of the \$20 million project, with the school district funding the other half.

The construction took about a year to complete, and the academy opened in time for the start of the 2014-15 school year.

There are about 650 students at the Eagle Academy. Some details are still being worked out, especially the one-mile radius rule, requiring students within that area to walk to school, even though there are no sidewalks along the route.

But the new school is a welcome addition to the community. The academy features the latest computer technology, and dedicated teachers and staff.



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