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Interesting cannabis proposal at Tribal Council

Tribal Council met this week with the owner of a Las Vegas medicinal cannabis organization, a tribal financial facilitator, and Warm Springs Ventures.

Dr. Nicola Spirtos owns the Apothecary Shoppe in Las Vegas, employing scientists and other doctors to produce award-winning cannabis products.

Dr. Spirtos is interested in working with the tribes on getting a tribal cannabis operation off the ground.

By a large majority, tribal members in 2016 approved the cannabis referendum, and Ventures and the tribal Cannabis Commission established a memorandum of understanding with the state of Oregon. But for a variety of reasons—financing mostly—getting the operation started has proven to be diffi-

cult.

Ventures and Tribal Council have determined that bringing in a partner would be the most likely way to develop a profitable cannabis enterprise.

Dr. Spirtos, working with a tribal financial facilitator from California, learned of the potential for the tribes to enter the cannabis market.

The emphasis here is medicinal cannabis and hemp, used in a variety of products.

The medicinal use of cannabis dates back thousands of years, such as in ancient Egypt, Dr. Spirtos said. In the present day the market for the hemp product cannabiodol, or CBD, is growing rapidly. This is a medicinal extract from cannabis and, unlike THC, is non-psychoactive.

CBD as a medicine can bring pain relief, and is an anti-inflammatory, Dr. Spirtos said. Because of the lack of THC, the CBD products can be shipped across state lines, he said.

At Tribal Council, Dr. Spirtos said the tribes would not want to get into the retail business of selling recreational marijuana. This market is already saturated with stores making marginal profits.

Growing the plant may also not be a good idea, as it can be cheaper to buy bulk amounts of cannabis from an established producer.

The extraction process is where the value would be added, at which point the product can be sold at a profit.

Owning the patent of a particular product is another area of revenue,

perhaps the most profitable of all, Dr. Spirtos said.

As a pain reliever, CBD could help address opioid addiction and abuse problems, said Tribal Councilwoman Carina Miller.

In other recent business at Tribal Council:

The Tribal Timber LLC has a two-year operating agreement with the tribes, and Branch of Natural Resources-Forestry. The Timber LLC had been operating on a year-by-year basis since its creation in 2016.

This led to some uncertainty in working with buyers, said Cal Mukumoto, Timber LLC chief operations officer.

— Dave McMechan

Notice to local residents

For residents of the reservation, included with this publication are annual water quality reports.

These include the 2017 annual water quality reports for the Sidwalter Community Water System, Simnasho-Schoolie Community Water System, and the Warm Springs Water Treatment Plant Community Water System.

The reports are designed to inform the public about the quality of water consumed by the residents these systems serve. These reports are also available online:

The Sidwalter Community Water System Annual Water Quality Report for 2017: <http://bit.ly/CCRSidwalter2017>

The Simnasho-Schoolie Community Water System Annual Water Quality Report for 2017: <http://bit.ly/CCRSimnashoSchoolie2017>

The Warm Springs Water Treatment Plant Community Water System Annual Water Quality Report for 2017: <http://bit.ly/CCRWarmSprings2017>

These reports have also been posted in following locations: the Warm Springs Post Office, tribal administration building, the Family Resource Center, Indian Health Service, the Senior Center, the Warm Springs Housing Authority, Warm Springs Market, Rainbow Market and Three Warriors Market. Consumers can request a copy of the report by contacting the Branch of Public Utilities at 541-553-3246.

Law to help with sea lion predation

A bill is moving forward in Congress that will make it easier to kill sea lions that are killing salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River.

The legislation was co-sponsored by Rep. Kurt Schrader of Oregon, and Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler.

The bill last week passed the House by a vote of 288-116.

The law would reduce some of the protections given to sea lions under the U.S. Marine Mammals Protection Act.

Since the passage of Marine Mammals law, in 1972, the sea lion population has rebounded to about 300,000.

Some of these animals are moving beyond the mouth of the Columbia River, upstream to Willamette Falls and the Bonneville Dam, where they prey on fish.

The new legislation would streamline the bureaucratic process to euthanize sea lions. The bill would allow federal agencies to issue kill permits to tribes and wildlife managers.

The orders would be limited to no more than 100 California and Stellar sea lions. Oregon and Washington officials have been using non-lethal methods to try and deter salmon predation.

The Confederated Tribes hosted Pi-Ume-Sha Treaty Days, commemorating of the Treaty of 1855. The weekend saw rodeo, softball, boxing, dance competitions and specials.

At the powwow grounds (below left) Miss Warm Springs Thyreicia Simtustus visits with guest Royalty. Meanwhile (below right) Boots Raccoon Johnson, age 3, rides Jax in the barrel race. Boots Raccoon comes from a long line of rodeo people. His parents are Rhett and Michaela Johnson.

Jayson Smith photos at right and below left; Edison Yazzie photo below right.



Kah-Nee-Ta update this week at Tribal Council

Tribal Council earlier this week was scheduled to hear a report from the Kah-Nee-Ta board of directors.

The board has been working with a private investment company that was interested in taking over management of the resort.

The challenge for the company has been securing the necessary financing to invest in the resort. Unfortunately, this has not happened.

A key difficulty has been collateral,

a way to give a lender recourse in the event of default. The board won't request Tribal Council to use the property for collateral.

The resort property itself is tribal land, and for this reason cannot be used as security. Some aspects of the resort—furnishings and equipment, for instance—could be put up as collateral, but this would not be enough to secure financing for a large investment in the resort.

Now, the options for Kah-Nee-Ta are limited. One option could be a partial closure of the resort, said Jim Manion, Kah-Nee-Ta board chairman, the other most probable is a complete shutdown.

For the near future, the resort will stay open through the summer months, Mr. Manion said. In the long-term, the board will seek direction from Tribal Council.

The goal for the board has been to have the resort operate as a self-

sustaining enterprise. This has not happened in several years, especially since Indian Head Casino moved from Kah-Nee-Ta in 2012.

The tribes have sustained the resort financially, though this has been increasingly difficult in recent years, in light of the tribal budget.

There are 170 employees currently working at the resort.

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