



Spilyay Tymoo

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Organization to begin reopening

Tribal Council on Tuesday voted 5-4 to begin the reopening of tribal organization starting this coming Monday, June 8. Next week will be the first phase of the four-phase reopening, with 25-percent of employees returning over each successive week.

The Covid-19 Response team had recommended a delay of one more week, to June 15. A majority of the Council members, though, felt it is time on June 8 to begin the reopening.

As the employees return there will be new precautions such as more cleaning supplies and hand sanitizers, thermometers, plexi-glass windows when appropriate, and in time additional precautions.

Over the weeks, as more employees return to work, there will be a need for additional cleaning supplies. Meanwhile, "I think we have enough now to open on June 8," said Caroline Cruz, Response team member and general manager of Health and Human Services.

The Response team had recommended the additional week of closure after last week and weekend that saw 18 new positive test results in the community. Ten of these were among members of the same family.

As these cases were reported, the Community Health Team and Clinic conducted the social tracing and additional testing. As of Tuesday of this week, the news was good with no new positive tests besides the 13.

Further update

To now the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center had administered 515 total Covid-19 tests. As of earlier this week, there were a total of 462 negative results; 15 pending. Over the past several weeks, there have been 35 total positive cases, with 17 people now recovered. The 18 most recent happened over the past 10 days or so.

"We continue to do random surveillance testing of our high-risk community members," said Hyllis Dauphinais, clinic chief executive officer. "We will begin a broader surveillance of the tribal employees, as staff begin to return to work in the coming weeks."

The Warm Springs Tribal Council and Covid-19 Response team firmly recommend:

"Our community members who have tested positive, please stay home and quarantine to protect our community from further spread.

"Many may not feel sick or have symptoms, but after testing positive, it is of the utmost importance that you quarantine for 14 days to prevent further spread of the virus."

Meanwhile, Tribal Council would like to congratulate those that have made it through the 12 years for education, to graduate high school. College graduates should be acknowledged too. *Please celebrate safely.*

Indian Head Casino reopening June 11

The Confederated Tribes announced Tuesday that Indian Head Casino will reopen at 10 a.m. on Thursday, June 11.

"We are very excited to open and with the amount of phone calls we receive on a daily basis from our guests, we know they are looking forward to our opening too," said Belinda Chavez, Director of Marketing for Indian Head Gaming.

"We are committed to following the Centers for Disease Control's guidelines, and we have implemented safety and sanitation measures in addition to limiting our occupancy to 250 total guests," said Chavez.



A few things you should keep in mind before you head over to Indian Head Casino:

The casino will open with new operating hours of 10 a.m. to 2 a.m.

All guests will be required to enter the casino thru the doors on the east side of the building, which is the entrance to Cottonwood

Restaurant. Face masks will be required for all guests and employees, as well as a touchless temperature check before entering the building.

Once you are on the casino floor you will notice a few small changes: At least initially, the entire property at Indian Head Casino will be non-smoking.

Plexiglass shields and social distancing markers have been installed in high traffic areas such as the Players Club, cashier booths and the check-out counter at the Tule Grill.

In addition to new cleaning procedures, Indian Head will provide multiple hand sanitizing stations on

the casino floor. The slot machines will be open and ready for play from the moment the doors open. Table games, however, will open on a later date.

All restaurants at Indian Head Casino will be open for take-out, and the Cottonwood Restaurant will offer curbside delivery.

Indian Head Casino voluntarily closed on March 18 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and continued to stay closed for nearly three months.

Indian Head Casino is owned and operated by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Learn more about the casino at: indianheadcasino.com/

The hard choice to cancel traditional events

Every spring, inside the Celilo Longhouse at Celilo Village on the edge of the Columbia River, traditional elders, food gatherers, and members of the public prepare to feast on the first Chinook salmon of the season. Ahead of the annual celebration, the sound of traditional songs and drums fills the air, as celebrants roast fish over open fires.

This year, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the village decided to hold the First Salmon Feast, while limiting attendance to reduce the public health risk. Several people who attended the feast on April 13 later tested positive for Covid-19, including Celilo Village leader Bobby Begay, although it wasn't confirmed that any of these people had contracted the virus at the longhouse event.

Less than two weeks later, Begay, 51, died from complications due to the virus. A leading fish technician for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Mr. Begay had a reputation as an effective advocate for cultural and environmental

protection. Friends and colleagues described him as a force of nature: upbeat, welcoming, and keen to build bridges between Native American communities and outsiders.

The tragedy of this year's feast brings into focus the terrible choices tribal communities everywhere are now facing. On one hand, canceling events may save lives and is necessary in the fight against a pandemic that has already devastated lives and livelihoods across the globe. Yet, for many Native American communities, such gatherings are critical; they reinforce a sense of cohesion and identity.

Some Native Americans fear that ceasing these practices could even jeopardize treaty-protected rights.

Wilson Wewa, a 64-year-old Tribal Council member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Northern Paiute spiritual leader, recalled how his grandfather and other tribal elders used to say that "all it will take is the stroke of a pen to take away our reservation, and then we're going to be just like white people."



Before his passing, the late Bobby Begay harvesting eels.

No Good Options

The First Salmon Feast holds tremendous cultural significance for the Native Americans who call the Columbia River home. Hosted near the former site of Celilo Falls, the feast draws hundreds of visitors each spring, who come to enjoy music, food, and the ancient custom of honoring the fish that are so central to Native American heritage in this area of the Pacific Northwest.

Four years ago Se-ah-dom

Edmo, 43, attended the feast. During the gathering that spring, she was so moved by the message of ritual and togetherness that she came away from the event inspired to leave her job, which had become less and less satisfying. "It was only because I was there [at the feast] that I was able to get to that place, hear those things, and make them real in my life," she said.

Please see EVENTS on 5

Census outreach on the reservation

Back in mid March the Confederated Tribes kicked off the 2020 Census count. Tribal member George Aguilar, in fact, filed the very first Census in the state of Oregon, a request made by the U.S. Census Bureau.

At the time of the kick-off event, the coronavirus was just beginning to make major headlines. Social distancing was something new. The tribal organization was still open, as Council had not yet declared the pandemic emergency.

The start of the Census on the reservation was important, as tribal under-counting has been a problem. This has led



to loss revenue: Census data directly impacts how the federal government allocates more than \$675 billion every year for programs and services vital for tribal communities. These include Medicaid, social services, housing, public safety, veterans services, emergency preparedness, education, school

lunches and more.

According to a report this spring: Native Americans are the most undercounted group on the U.S. Census.

Understandably, the pandemic has made the Census even more of a challenge for the tribes, as the outreach has been more difficult. At a recent count, fewer than 20 percent of the membership had filed their Census information. The National Congress of American Indians has said the pandemic has made the Census difficult across Indian Country.

This week the Census enumerators again began distributing information at residences on the Warm

Springs Reservation. And there are incentives for filing your Census information.

The Complete Count Committee is creating these incentives to encourage people to participate in the Census. There are t-shirts and other gifts for those who filed. Volunteers like Jaylyn Suppah and Sue Matters are helping coordinate the community outreach.

The Census is a series of questions such as your age and date of birth, your race, and sex. There are questions about the number of people in the household, and the relationship to the person answering the Census question.

Please see CENSUS on 6

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