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Covid-19 update

There were 15 new cases of Covid-19 reported for Warm Springs in the Tuesday, December 1 community update. The results were from 109 tests conducted on Monday, November 30.

As of Tuesday, there were 46 known active cases of Covid-19 on the reservation, with 62 close contacts being monitored by Community Health and IHS.

There have been 515 confirmed cases of Covid-19 on the reservation since testing began in the spring.

The Health and Wellness Center has conducted a total of 5,222 Covid-19 tests.

There have 54 hospitalizations among the reservation community since March of this year, with 50 discharged; and there have been ten deaths.

Safety even more important as vaccine nears

By the end of this month shipments of Covid-19 vaccines are expected to be ready for distribution in the U.S. This would be the turning point in the fight against the pandemic.

Like other providers across the country, the Warm Springs Indian Health Services Clinic is coordinating with national organizers—in this case the IHS headquarters—regarding how to implement the distribution, and then the administration of the Covid-19 vaccine. The IHS has a comprehensive plan that guides the overall process.

There are many more details to be worked out during this unprecedented and massive health initiative. An ex-

ample: How will the vaccines be transported from a central location to the regional distribution centers, and then in turn to the local care provider facilities? Would Warm Springs IHS travel to the regional site to retrieve the vaccines? Storage during transport, and then on-site at the local levels are related challenges.

Some aspects are more certain. Example: By all accounts vaccinations are expected to begin by the middle or end of this month. Another certainty: There will not be enough vaccines until into next year to provide for the general population.

This week at the national level, the Advisory Committee on Immunizations is meeting to determine who will receive the first vaccines. The committee is an independent

panel of advisors to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

On Tuesday of this week the Advisory Committee was meeting to determine whether the first groups to be vaccinated will be the health care workers, and residents of nursing homes. These two groups would be the Phase 1 recipients of the Covid-19 vaccine distribution.

The Advisory Committee and CDC have not faced a question like this before, because of the scope of the Covid-19 pandemic; and because there are many other people in the U.S. with underlying medical conditions who are also vulnerable to the virus.

The pharmaceutical companies Pfizer and Moderna have applied to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for authorization of their

Covid-19 vaccines. The matter is on a fast-track as part of Operation Warp Speed. An estimated 6.5 million doses could be available within two weeks, with more following through December and into 2021. By the end of December it is possible that 40 million doses could be available in the U.S., enough for roughly 20 million people.

According to surveys, many people in the U.S. are willing to take the vaccine as soon as possible, while many others say they will not receive the vaccine. In one survey, 60 percent of people between the ages of 65 and 80 said they would likely receive the shot.

Either way, as we approach this turning point in the battle against the virus, the need for safety is greater than ever, because there may be greater hope nearly at hand.

Making a home away from home

Masami and Tyrone 'Ty' Smith have two homes, really. One is Warm Springs, where they grew up and often visit. And the other is in Ohio, where they help manage and grow the Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio, or NAICCO, located in Columbus.

Masami is the NAICCO executive director, and Ty is the project director.

NAICCO is the only viable Native American center in Ohio—a state with no Indian reservations, so no real presence of Indian services like IHS, the BIA and BIE.

The experience of Native Americans in urban areas is different from that on a reservation, where a tribal member can most always feel at home. So NAICCO is especially important to Native people of Ohio, and even of neighboring states like Indiana and Kentucky. Ty estimates that Native people who are members of the NAICCO community come from more than 100 tribes across all of In-



Ty and Masami Smith (at center) with members of the NAICCO community and NAICCO Cuisine, representing a diversity of tribal backgrounds.

dian Country.

It's a place where Native people living in and around Ohio can feel at home—not always easy for an urban Indian who may be far away from family back home.

Masami and Ty grew up in Warm Springs, deciding to leave in 1995 when they were in their mid 20s. They first went to South Dakota, and then visited Ohio. Twenty-five years later they still live there, helping to make a going enterprise of NAICCO, and its latest addition, the NAICCO Cuisine food trailer.

How all this began was by luck or a kind of coincidence.

After they arrived in Ohio in the 1990s, Ty was thumbing through the Columbus phone book. At the time he was looking for work. By chance he came across the listing for the Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio.

They called the center, and started visiting. Masami became a regular member around 2001. She was volunteering with any NAICCO projects that were going on or coming up.

Since growing up in Warm Springs she was a powwow dancer, and knew traditional sewing and other crafts. And she would share

these with other NAICCO members.

Ty enrolled at the Ohio State University, majoring in the field of Social Work. Then in 2011—ten years after first joining NAICCO—Masami was named the center's executive director. She became successful at writing grants for the center, to the point where she soon needed full-time help in managing the center and its programs. "A grant writer helped land the early grants in 2011," Masami says. "After that we wrote for all other grants to follow on our own."

Please see NAICCO on 2

Council items in December

As the year 2020 is coming to a close, Tribal Council will meet on a variety of matters, with Cares Act spending being one of the final items of the month.

Next week begins with the updates from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Office of the Special Trustee. The Indian Health Services update with Hyllis Dauphinais, chief executive officer of the Warm Springs clinic, is next; followed by the Covid-19 update with the Response Team.

Some items on Tuesday, December 8 include a Family First Act update with the state of Oregon; and a Warm Springs Children's Protective Services update with Cecelia Collins, CPS director. The Timber Committee then meets with Council to discuss the wood cutting ordinance.

Finance is scheduled to meet with Council regarding a supplemental budget for a Warm Springs ball fields grant. And Tribal Council scheduled a government-to-government with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation for Friday of next week, December 11.

Explanation of developments at 'the Dips'

The following are answers to questions some community members may have regarding developments at the Trailer Court area, or the Dips. If you have not been near this site lately, you would not have noticed the work that has been going on over the last month. The site is being prepared to bring modular trailers to be used as a quarantine site for Covid-19. The following questions and answers will explain the circumstances:

Question: What is occurring at the Dips at Park Place Street?

The Warm Springs Housing Authority and the Health and Human Services (H&HS) general manager were successful in applying for the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) grant addressing the homeless population; specifically, those experiencing chronic homelessness. This happened in September 2019.

The land site known as the Dips was applied for by the Warm Springs Housing Authority, and it was approved per resolution to bring housing to the homeless.

There are two phases to this

project. The first phase will provide 10 cottage size one-bedroom homes for individuals needing a home and matching the criteria, and remodeling a duplex for two families. The plan for building the cottages and remodeling is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2021.

The second phase was to add seven to eight homes, services targeting the same population. The Housing Authority invited the Health and Human Services Quarantine Project to begin with the second phase project before the first

phase. The H&HS Quarantine Project needs to be completed by the end of this year, due to the requirement that Cares Act funds be spent by December 31, 2020.

Question: How were the trailers targeting quarantine added if this grant was for the chronically homeless?

The Warm Springs Housing Authority proposed to the Health and Human Services general manager to combine efforts as the Phase 2 part of the grant. Phase 2 would

bring the FEMA trailers targeting those needing to be quarantined, then when the crisis passes the trailers would be used for the homeless population and a 90-day transitional home for those returning back from treatment.

The seven available FEMA trailers would be set up to quarantine locally instead of sending community members who need to be quarantined to other areas such as Madras.

Providing this service locally would be for the comfort of our community members so they can be near their families and friends.

EXPLANATION continues on page 5



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