

# Fire and Safety Chief on board

The Warm Springs Fire and Safety Department—providing the community with 24-hour seven-day fire and ambulance response—relies on 21 full-time employees, ten part-time and two volunteers.

Great leadership for the department—as they handle emergency, sometimes life-and-death situations—is essential. As Fire and Safety Chief Scott Spaulding says, “Our purpose here is to protect and take care of the people.” And for the past two years Fire and Safety has done all this during the pandemic, only adding to the challenges of the emergency response profession.

Chief Spaulding has been Fire and Safety Chief for just a few weeks now, though his work and time with the department goes back more than two decades years.

Chief Spaulding is originally from the central New York region, where he grew up on the family dairy farm. It was there that he first became involved in emergency response, working as a volunteer with his father on an ambulance squad.

In the 1980s he joined the mili-



Fire and Safety Chief Scott Spaulding

tary, serving as a Corpsman with the U.S. Navy from 1988 to '92. During his time with the Navy, Chief Spaulding served overseas during the Gulf War Desert Shield and Desert Strom operations. During his time as a Corpsman he was also stationed on the West Coast, and this eventually brought him to Central Oregon.

Moving to Madras 20 years ago,

he met the Jefferson County Fire and Safety Chief, working with that department, training as an Emergency Medical Technician, and becoming a Paramedic. He first joined Warm Springs Fire and Safety in 2001. Since that time he worked with the department part-time and full-time, depending on what else was going on at time.

Then a year ago he took a job with John Day emergency response. However, Warm Springs Fire and Safety this winter needed a new chief. Earlier this year, Nancy Seyler, acting Public Safety general manager, and tribal Emergency Management director Dan Martinez reached out to Mr. Spaulding, wanting to know if he would come back to Warm Springs as acting chief. This led to his becoming Chief of Warm Springs Fire and Safety, starting late last month.

Chief Spaulding’s wife is Michelle, who works at the Indian Health Service Clinic. They have two sons, three daughters, and seven grand kids. And they work, as the Chief says, “To protect and take care of the people.”

— Dave McMechan

# BIA reforming Corrections practices

The Bureau of Indian Affairs announced a series of reforms to the Office of Justice Services Correctional Program. The changes are to protect the rights, dignity and safety of those who are in custody.

After concerning reports about the treatment of incarcerated individuals, including 16 inmate deaths in custody between 2016 and 2020, the BIA launched a three-month review in the fall of 2021.

The review included the commissioning of a third-party report to review current conditions in BIA operated and funded detention facilities.

There are a total of 96 Corrections programs funded by the BIA, 26 operated by the BIA and 70 operated by tribes.

“As the son of a corrections officer, I value the wellbeing of all people, those in our custody as well as those responsible for providing a safe and rehabilitative environment,” said Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland.

“We will not shy away from acknowledging the past and taking ownership of the path to improve conditions in our facilities. The reforms we are announcing today represent a new chapter for the Bureau of Indian Affairs as we move toward organizational culture change.”

The report lays out recommendations for the Interior Department, informed by an assessment of the thoroughness and effectiveness of the 16 closed in-custody

investigations. Questions are whether the BIA’s current in-custody death investigation reporting meets modern standards; whether the incident investigations met common industry standards for proper evaluation; and whether investigators have proper training and skills to effectively investigate in-custody death incidents.

Consistent with the findings of the bureau’s review, BIA is moving forward with more than two dozen reforms focused on:

Updating policies and implementing consistent standards across corrections facilities;

Improving the recruitment, retention, training and morale of staff; and,

Improving interagency coordination with federal partners to ensure safety for inmates and accountability for correctional officers.

Assistant Secretary Newland will soon further outline the reforms that the BIA has undertaken, as well as the overall culture change he is overseeing at Office of Justice Services.

## W.S. Little League needs volunteers

Warm Springs Nation Little League is looking for volunteer coaches for the upcoming baseball and softball season. The Nation needs coaches for T-Ball, Co-Ed Rookies Baseball, Baseball and Softball Minors, Majors and Softball Juniors. You can contact Edmund Francis to learn more at 541-325-3856.

## Senior meals...

The Warm Springs Senior Wellness Program offers meals to Senior Citizens 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, for delivery or pick up at the Greeley Heights Community Building. On Monday, February 28, the menu will include Black Bean Chili, Corn Bread and Fruit.