



Spilyay Tymoo

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Wasco Chieftainship discussion on May 22

An Agency District meeting is set for Monday evening, May 22, to discuss the Chieftainship selection process. The meeting will be at the Agency Longhouse, dinner at 6 p.m. and the meeting at 7. The meeting is to move the process forward in choosing the next Chief of the Wasco Tribe on Tribal Council.

The Chieftainship has been vacant September 26 of 2022, following the passing of the late Wasco Chief Alfred 'JR' Smith, who had served as Chief for 10 years, since 2012. A point of discussion now is the process for naming a new Wasco Chief to the Tribal Council, a lifetime position on Council.

In November of 2012, the late Chief Smith took office following an election process, after which the Tribal Council recognized the election results and confirmed Chief Smith to Council. Chief Smith did not believe the election was appropriate or necessary, saying the election was not a "customary" process, as required in the tribal Council.

A similar issue is being discussed regarding the current Chieftainship vacancy, and may be a point of discussion during the May 22 Agency District meeting.

Pelton-Round Butte earns low-impact certification

The Pelton Round Butte hydropower project on the Deschutes River was recertified recently by the Low Impact Hydro Institute, affirming the Confederated Tribes and partner PGE's commitment to responsible practices that reduce the project's environmental impact.

The certification, issued through 2035, means that the Pelton Round Butte facility meets criteria for natural resource protection in multiple categories. The categories include water quality protection, upstream and downstream fish passage, cultural and historic resource protection, and recreational resources.

While there are around 2,500 hydropower dams in the U.S., only about 200 have earned the Low Impact Hydro Institute, or LIHI distinction.

The Pelton-Round Butte hydro facilities were completed in 1964. During more recent years, the tribes have acquired part ownership in the dams, with a commitment to restoring anadromous fish runs above the facilities. Meanwhile, PGE is working to decarbonize and integrate more renewable resources: Emissions-free hydropower continues to play a critical role in providing reliable power to meet its customer demand, PGE said.

Honoring the 2023 Senior of the Year

An eventful and historic life it has been and continues to be after these 93 years: Veteran, author and tribal historian, George Aguilar Sr. is the 2023 Elder of the Year of the Confederated Tribes. Mr. Aguilar received the honor at the Seniors Day this month celebration at the Longhouse.

Among his many accomplishments and projects over these nine decades, Mr. Aguilar researched and wrote the celebrated *When the River Ran Wild! Indian Traditions of the Mid-Columbia and the Warm Springs Reservation*, winner of the Oregon Book Award for



Winona Strong presents George Aguilar as Senior of the Year.

Creative Nonfiction.

Winona Strong and Eliza Brown Jim presented Mr. Aguilar with the

Senior of the Year vest. They then presented veterans Rain Circle, U.S. Army, and Austin Smith Jr., Ma-

rines, with blankets in appreciation of their years of service.

The 2023 Senior Day was once again well attended, following an hiatus of four years because of the pandemic. On hand this year were the many guests from around the region, the cooks and drummers, guest speakers, the Early Childhood Education Center Dancers, many volunteers, the salmon bake, giveaways, raffles and more.

Councilman Wilson Wewa Sr. was organizer and master of ceremonies. Everyone agreed it was great to be back at the gathering, the first Warm Springs Seniors Day since the spring of 2019.

More Seniors Day on 9

MMIR Awareness



KWSO photos

Among participants at the MMIR Marathon were Jennifer Clements and Angelo Medina (above); and Lynnelle Danzuka (right).

The Warm Springs Missing and Murdered Indigenous Natives Awareness Marathon saw great support from 17 teams and 118 participants, plus the many spectators along the 20-plus mile course.

"We had a great turnout and great day," said Reina Estimo, one of the event organizers.

Reina noted that among the

marathon runners was Mona Cochran, who is in her 70s and ran nearly all of the course, before handing off to her teammate. Anthony Caldera ran the whole race on his own.

The marathon this year also included some teams that were made up mostly of young people, showing the awareness effort is working.

MMIR continues on 9



Probate judge urges community to avoid backlog

Roberta Armstrong serves the Tribal Court as the Probate Judge. She was appointed to the position last year and re-appointed this year by Tribal Council.

Judge Armstrong has worked with the tribes for many years, having first come here as a legal intern in 2007 to help the membership with the writing of wills and trusts. And for the past 15 years she has been an attorney.

Judge Armstrong is urging community members to help avoid adding to the already existing backlog of Probate cases.

"We have 590 backlogged cases," she says, "and I'm stressing the importance of utilizing the tools available to the community to expedite the probate process."

One such tool available to the



Tribal Probate Judge Roberta Armstrong

public is NativeProbate.org, a website designed to assist Indian families in handling their loved ones' probate on their own.

The website provides general information on Probate; and court-approved forms can be found on the site. Additionally, the Native Probate court offers a court facilitator, who can be reached at 541-615-1815 to request a Probate

packet. (Essential to note: the facilitator cannot provide legal advice.)

As the newly re-appointed Probate Judge for the Warm Springs community, Judge Armstrong encourages attorneys and advocates to assist in filing Probate matters to address the large backlog of pending cases. "By working together, we can help families navigate the process more efficiently and effectively," she says.

In response to an article in the May 2 Spilyay, outlining the Probate process, Judge Armstrong acknowledges the changes that have been made to streamline the process.

These changes include virtual hearings and fewer required hearings. However, the Judge also emphasizes that community members must still be proactive in providing necessary information and documentation to avoid delays.

She urges community members

to be aware of the process's requirements, including filling out forms regarding the estate's assets, the will, and bank information. Additionally, all vehicles belonging to the deceased must be parked until Probate is complete, and the home must be safely kept until the Probate is closed.

In conclusion, Judge Armstrong encourages community members to utilize the resources available to them, and familiarize themselves with the Probate process requirements, in order to avoid adding to the backlog of cases.

As all Probate hearings are currently done virtually, community members can participate in the process from the comfort of their own homes.

"By working together, the community can ensure a smooth and efficient Probate process for all involved," the Judge said.

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