

Letters to the editor

At Head Start

Warm Springs Head Start is opening an additional Head Start program for children who will be 5 on or before September 1.

Families with children at that age who are not currently in the Head Start program, can complete an application for the new room at the Early Childhood Education Center front office.

You can call or email Laurissa Bellanger to learn more, 541-553-3242; email: laurissa.bellanger@wstribes.org

School survey

The Jefferson County School District 509-J is conducting an online school experience survey.

The district is partnering with YouthTruth to hear what families have to say about their school experiences.

Please help your child's school understand how to improve by taking the short 15-minute anonymous survey.

Please take the survey before it closes at midnight on January 27. Go to the website:

ytsurvey.org/509jfamily24

The YouthTruth survey is a chance to share honest and anonymous feedback about your child's school.

Your responses are anonymous. They will be combined with the responses of other parents and guardians before being shared with leadership. If you write any comments, please don't include your name or anything else that might identify you.

Most questions ask you to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with statements on a scale of one to five.

This survey is offered in various languages, with the language choice at the dropdown menu in the upper right corner of your screen at the survey site.

Weather alerts

The Warm Springs tribes offer an alert system that communicates emergency information to employees and the general public.

This system is designed to send texts and e-mail messages to compatible devices in the event of an emergency situation.

The notification system will only be utilized for an emergency situation, for example a government shutdown due to inclement weather.

KWSO has a link to sign up in a news post at [kwsso.org](http://bit.ly/CTWSOAlerts). See: <http://bit.ly/CTWSOAlerts>

And if you have questions, you can contact the Office of Information Systems, 541-553-3275.

Nominate Teacher of the Year

Nominations are now open for Oregon Teacher of the Year. Honor a special educator in your life on the Oregon Teacher of the Year website through February 21. Nominees for Oregon Teacher of the Year should be exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable, and skilled licensed public school educators in grades pre-K through 12.

The Oregon Teacher of the Year serves as the face and voice of educators across the state. As a representative of the profession, this teacher leader is asked to engage and inspire other teachers and community leaders.

All eligible teachers who have been nominated will be invited to apply. Candidates who submit an application will then be in-the-running to be selected as a Regional Teacher of the Year from one of the 19 Education Service Districts statewide. Every Regional Teacher of the Year will be awarded \$1,000 and will be celebrated across the state in September.

One of the regional winners will then be chosen as the 2024-25 Oregon Teacher of the Year by a blue ribbon panel. Thanks to ODE's partnership with the Oregon Lottery, the Oregon Teacher of the Year receives a gift of \$10,000 as well as a special fund to cover all travel costs for the year.

The Oregon Teacher of the Year will also submit an application to be considered for the honor of National Teacher of the Year. For more information about Oregon Teacher of the Year eligibility requirements, please see the 'About' section on the Oregon Teacher of the Year website. oregonteacheroftheyear.org

Fitness classes

Fitness classes with Wellness coordinator Bonita Leonard are held weekdays at the Community Center aerobics room. The 6 a.m. classes are every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and there are noon-time classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Bonita is also available for one-on-one weight training. Stop by and see her or call 541-553-3589. Email: bonita.leonard@wstribes.org

Birth

Anola Lakay Craig, Brandon Craig and Menamoo Sahme of Madras are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter Anola Lakay Craig, born on December 24, 2023.

Anola joins brother Elirig, 13, Tuxnala, 4, and Kinula, 3.

Grandparents on the father's side are Kathy Smith of Madras, and Joel Craig of Warm Springs.

Grandparents on the mother's side are Kenneth Sahme of Warm Springs, and Ruby Bulloch of Portland.

YouthBuild getting ready for 2024 projects

Heart of Oregon Corps—Youth Build is hosting open enrollment, and accepting applications for the January 24 youth group.

YouthBuild is for young people ages 16-24 with the chance to gain hands-on work experience, while continuing their educational goals.

YouthBuild offers the opportunity to explore different career paths, and develop essential job skills, while receiving mentorship and support from staff.



YouthBuild is like a family who supports each and every one of each other to be successful.

The program members divide their time between the classroom, job training, and leadership development.

YouthBuild has helped many young people of the

Warm Springs tribal community to earn their diploma, while having an income and learning job skills.

An upcoming YouthBuild pre-enrollment information session is this Thursday, January 11.

Applications are due by January 15.

Virtual sessions are also available upon request. See the YouthBuild at the website:

heartforegoncorps.org

A view on the reservation water situation

by George Aguilar

(The following is the third and concluding part of the article by author George Aguilar, regarding the reservation water system.)

In the spring of 1957 the Celilo Falls fishery was flooded and several million dollars were given the four treaty tribes of the Columbia River, a monetary compensation for the loss. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs distributed only \$140 per every man, woman and child, and the rest of the Celilo fund was put into escrow for eight years collecting interest.

The primary purpose of the escrow fund was for future developments. The Or-

egon State College was hired to do a study for the tribal developments and use of financial affairs.

During the flood of 1964, most of the water infrastructure was damaged beyond repair. Several bridges, sewer and water, and roads were washed out, and some residential units were swept away in the Greenville Village.

The Highway 26 bridge at Warm Springs was also obliterated, and the Warm Springs Reservation was cut off from the rest of the world for several weeks.

In the spring of 1965 the Tribal Council created a temporary committee titled the Million Dollar Housing

fund. Under this program, the executive director made a projection that for housing up to our time was several hundred units, and the fund was just seed money from the Celilo compensation. The housing and tribal Credit enterprise were also created.

Rebuilding the water and sewer and other infrastructure, redoing the heavily damaged Kah-Nee-Ta Village, construction of a new modern restaurant at Kah-Nee-Ta, the now community center building, and many other projects began to emerge.

All of these projects were because of the Celilo compensation fund. The

now living enrolled members should be very thankful to the old timers who refrained from using this money in the form of individual per capita disbursements.

The Bend water infrastructure is a very good method to observe. It uses springs and ground water. Madras, Culver, Metolius and the Agency Plains have the Opal Springs. Flow rate for Opal Springs is 108,000 gallons per minute. Hey! Pardner. Give or share with us some of that good stuff!

This has been a short article by no means a manifesto, just throwing in my two cents worth, If that's worth anything.

For sale at Fire and Safety: 1987 GMC pumper-tanker for bid

Fire and Safety is offering for sale a 1987 GMC pumper-tanker. The bid process is as follows:

Please stop by Fire and Safety's office between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. At the office you can fill out a form that will include:

Name, address, bid amount, and phone number. Then place the document in a sealed envelope, signed by the bidder.

The winning bid will be selected on January 19 at the end of the day. The winning bidder will need to pick up the truck and the title from

Fire and Safety no later than January 31. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Warm Springs Fire and Safety will not be responsible for the vehicle once the winning bid is notified. The following describes the vehicle: This 1987 pumper-tanker has automatic transmission with 30,649 miles. The tires are expired per the National Fire Protection Association, the NFPA.

The pump is damaged, and the tank and plumbing leaks. The six batteries are expired and not chargeable. The truck does not run. The fire equipment is not included.



Please contact the office at 541-553-1634. Or stop by 2112 Wasco Street, if you would like to come see the truck, or if you have any questions. This truck is no longer suitable for the fire

service. In order to purchase new trucks, Fire and Safety needs to let the trucks go that can no longer keep up with fighting fire, keeping the crews and community safe.

Some notable changes to coverage under the Oregon Health Plan

Access to health care through Oregon Health Plan—OHP/Medicaid—saw some changes last year, and more taking effect this month as well. OHP benefits that took effect in 2023 that you may not know about:

- Expanded benefits for children. OHP now covers all medically necessary and medically appropriate care for members under 21.
- Transportation reimbursement rate increase. When members drive themselves to doctors' appointments or other covered health care services, or are driven by someone else such as a friend or relative, they can be reimbursed at a rate of 44 cents per mile—a 76-percent increase over the previous rate.

OHP benefits that take effect in January 2024:

- Continuous eligibility protections. Oregon's new policy called 'continuous eligibility' means most people

will keep coverage until their next renewal—even if their income or family size changes before then. This applies to most cases that have renewed or applied for OHP since April 2023.

During the pandemic emergency, people kept OHP even if they were no longer eligible. The new continuous eligibility protections apply only after someone's post-pandemic renewal (which started in April 2023). People who have renewed since then may see a "continuous eligibility period" in their eligibility notice.

Exceptions:

- Continuous eligibility does not apply to most long term services and supports.
- Protections begin only after completion of the application or renewal process, including resolving any requests for information.
- Benefits can still close or be suspended if you move out of state, voluntarily ask

us to close benefits, become a resident of a public institution such as jail, prison or the state hospital, pass away, or in cases of fraud or error. Help paying for Medicare may end if you lose Medicare.

Faster enrollment in a coordinated care organization, or CCO.

Most new OHP members will be enrolled in a CCO within a few days after selecting one. Previously, newly enrolled members often spent a week or more on OHP's 'Open Card' coverage while they waited to be transitioned to a CCO.

Open Card coverage provides the same care benefits as regular OHP, but there are fewer (and often different) providers who accept Open Card. By transitioning into a CCO within a few days of starting OHP coverage, it will be easier for new members to find a doctor and reduce disruptions in care. If members



do not choose a CCO, most will be assigned one, and the transition may take longer.

OHP benefits that will take effect later this year:

- OHP Bridge. This is a new health coverage program launching in July 2024. OHP Bridge will cover adults up to age 65 with income above traditional OHP Plus limits up to 200-percent of the federal poverty level (the FPL) who do not have access to affordable health insurance.

For example, a single adult making up to \$29,160 per year may qualify for OHP Bridge, which is a significant increase over previous OHP Plus income limits. Adults must also have eligible citizenship or immigration status to qualify.

Spilyay Tymoo
(Coyote News, Est. 1976)

Publisher Emeritus in Memorium: Sid Miller
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Spilyay Tymoo is published bi-weekly by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Our offices are located at 4174 Highway 3 in Warm Springs.

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Annual Subscription rates: Within U.S.: \$20.00