

Tribal member, Willie Mercier, begins a regular section this month in "Smoke Signals" focusing on youth news and information. Willie is a student at Willamina High School and is working with the tribal newsletter as part of the Cooperative Work Experience Program. He will be writing stories, taking photographs and doing the layout and design for the youth section.



Willie's Story

Hello tribal youth! My name is Willie Mercier and I'm a 16 year old junior at Willamina High School and I'm part of their work experience program.

My interests are playing baseball and collecting comic books, baseball and basketball cards.

At my job I write articles about tribal youth and their activities for the youth section of "Smoke Signals".

I also write stories pertaining to the tribal youth and government. I take pictures of the tribal youth activities and edit the youth news section.

I hope you like the stories and articles I write and if you have any news or story ideas, please let me know or leave a message for me at the tribal office at 879-5211.

Youth Council Retreat

The Tribal Youth Council held a retreat where they had talks about teen issues. The group stayed in a beach house in Lincoln City on October 12th - 14th, 1991.

Discussions were held on drugs/alcohol and the negative affects on the human body, sexually transmitted diseases and their affects, the myths about the diseases, and other teen issues like relationships, trust, parents, and school.

Recreational events on the retreat were movies, frisbee and football games on the beach, a 5.4 mile hike to Hart's Cove on Cascade Head just south of Lincoln City, a barbecue, and making new friends.

Eight group members plus the A&D Education/Prevention Counselor, Camille Van Vleet attended the retreat.

The event was sponsored by the tribal alcohol and drug program.

Youth Council Officers

The Tribal Youth Council elected their officers on September 12, 1991. Jeff Mercier was elected chairman. Jeff will help plan and organize meetings and group activities. He is also the spokesperson for the Council. Travis Stewart was elected vice chairman. Travis will assist Jeff and takes the chair position when Jeff is unable to fulfill his duties. Shonn Leno was elected treasurer and will handle the money the group makes from fundraisers. Peggy Brickell was elected the secretary. Peggy will take notes of the meetings held at the high school.

BREAKING AWAY

Do you know how to say good-bye to drugs?

If you don't take a look to see if you have a problem with drugs most people who use drugs have a problem and don't know it.

You could be hurting people that you don't even know you are hurting, people like your parents, brothers, sisters, friends, or other relatives. This problem has probably caused you a lot of grief and taught you how to ignore, avoid, distort, or numb what's real.

Drugs are like a disease and even have some things in common with diseases they can get worse, they can kill you if they get bad enough. Some people think that breaking free of drugs is like breaking a bad habit, well it's not, a bad habit isn't going to kill you, drugs will.

There are seven stages you go through when you quit using drugs, first there is denial, at this stage you tell your self that your relationship with drugs or alcohol hasn't caused any problems or you might think that you can take control of your problem any time you want but you can't and others might disagree with you.

The second stage is bargaining where you try to make

deals with your self like saying "I'll just gradually cut down" or sometimes people try to make deals with family or friends, you might say things like "please give me one more chance".

The next step is anger you might get mad at your self for trying drugs in the first place. Step number four is guilt, you get this feeling when your behavior violates you values. Guilt is a perfectly natural feeling and it is better to talk to someone when you feel this way.

Depression is the fifth step and it usually happens right before you surrender this is when you understand that now is the time to let this disease go. The sixth step is surrender, this is where you admit you have a problem and have enough courage to reach out and get help. The seventh and last stage is acceptance, you can admit and accept that you have a problem and do something about it.

-Information compiled by Willie Mercier from "Breaking Away", a guide to help teens stop using chemicals, by Jean Sassatelli, R.N.

Youth Council Meeting Minutes

On September 12, 1991, the Tribal Youth Council had their first meeting of the year.

At the meeting, the group talked about the trip to Lincoln City on the 12th, 13th, and 14th of October. They will stay at a beach house in Lincoln City for three days and two nights. At the retreat they will talk about drug and alcohol prevention.

The group also talked about the tribal youth t-shirts that they had ordered. Camille Van Vleet will have them available for sale. To buy one call her at 879-5211. In November the Council is planning a trip to the Portland Museum to see the Native American artifacts being displayed.



Members of the Tribal Youth Council participated in a retreat in October. The retreat included a hike to Hart's Cove on Cascade Head, just north of Lincoln City.