

A NEW ERA IN TRIBAL EDUCATION BEGINS WITH 6.8 MILLION DOLLAR CAMPUS

Education continued from front page

neering and design. The entire building has been carefully thought out to suit the needs of the Tribe. It's environment is specifically crafted to promote a atmosphere that is conducive to learning and gives the occupants, whether they are students or teachers, a feeling of belonging. It also has the latest in Internet access, with a high-speed T-1 line connected to all of the computers.

"It's a premier facility, no doubt," said Public Works Director Eric Scott, who was the building's project manager. "It has several different classrooms, a media center, a library, computer classrooms, as well as smaller individual classrooms and small business classrooms," said Scott.

The entire project, including infrastructure, roads, buildings and parking lots, cost \$6.8 million and actually came out about \$300,000 under budget. The construction crew only took one half of one day off during the entire winter of 2001.

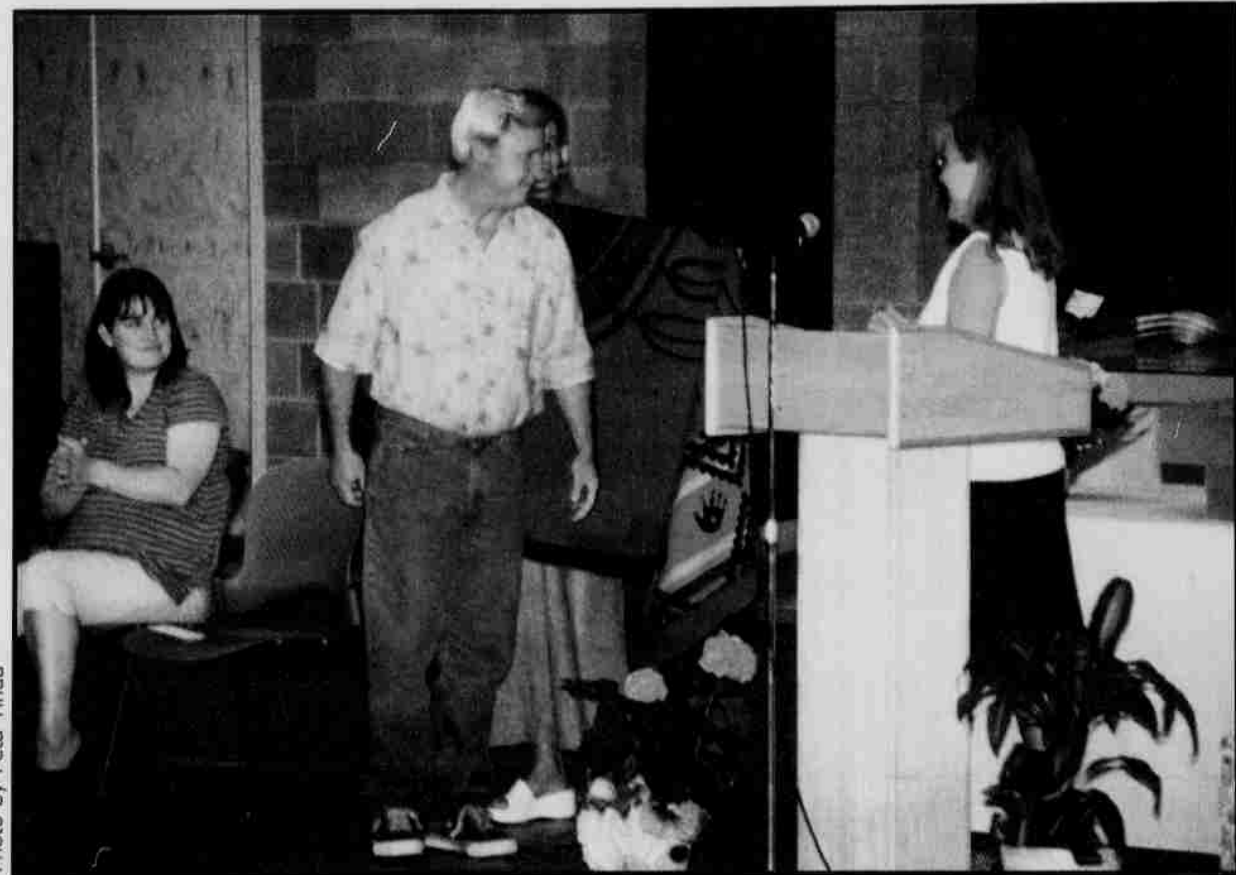
The buildings incorporate numerous skylights and ambient lighting. Every effort was made to include as many natural light sources as possible. The walls are covered in cedar siding and there is a handsome sculpture made of columnar basalt in the front of the youth education building.

There are also two covered outdoor recess areas, for when it rains in the wintertime.

The new education complex differs from other Tribal buildings in that Tribal members were very closely involved with how the building would look and what functions it would serve.

"Most of the teachers and education staff were part of the design team, so we all have a sense of pride in the building," said Scott.

Tribal members chose how the floor plan would look and what size the buildings needed to be and what



"Thanks For The Help" — Public Works Director Eric Scott was honored with a Tribal blanket by Marion Mercier and her education staff for overseeing the successful completion of the Tribe's new campus.

colors they liked. During the planning phase of the building, meetings were held to try and understand what the specific needs of the staff and teachers were to make the space more efficient.

"We sought input from all of the users and asked them to be part of the design team," said Scott.

They also chose what materials to use and in one case, the color of the striping around the gymnasium floor. The tiles in the hallways in the preschool and HeadStart were painted by the Before and After Care kids, and installed before the students arrived, so that when they arrived they would feel more at home.

"We did a lot of surveys and went to Native American club meetings at Willamina High School," said Lisa Leno. "The students got to talk about what they wanted the new building to look like. It's not often

you get a chance to do that...it was like a dream come true," said Leno.

Because they were so deeply involved with the new building, many Tribal members feel a strong connection with it.

That connection is apparent when talking to Marion Mercier, Tribal Education Manager, who has been involved with the new building from the start and who many would credit as being one of the driving influences behind getting the new building constructed. She has high hopes for the new building and sees it playing a central role in the lives of Tribal members.

"Our hope is that it will be a hub for the community," said Mercier.

"People won't have to travel to get education services. Now they can come here. Our kids deserve to have a safe healthy learning environment," said Mercier.

Once someone has been involved in the Tribal education system, it stays open as a resource for them for life.

"This Tribe is made up of very different people. A lot of Tribal members take advantage of the education opportunities available here, from kids to Elders," said Mercier.

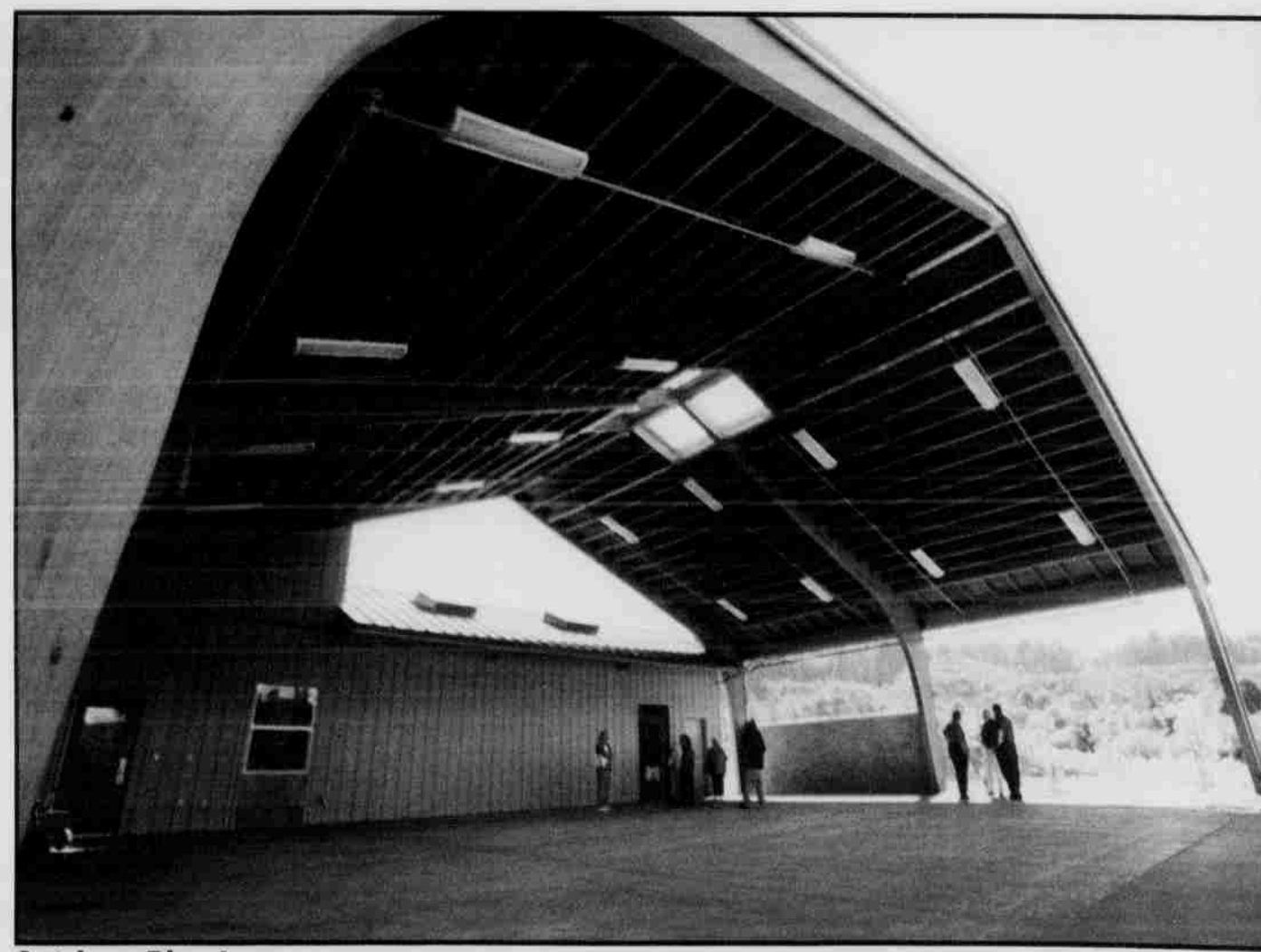
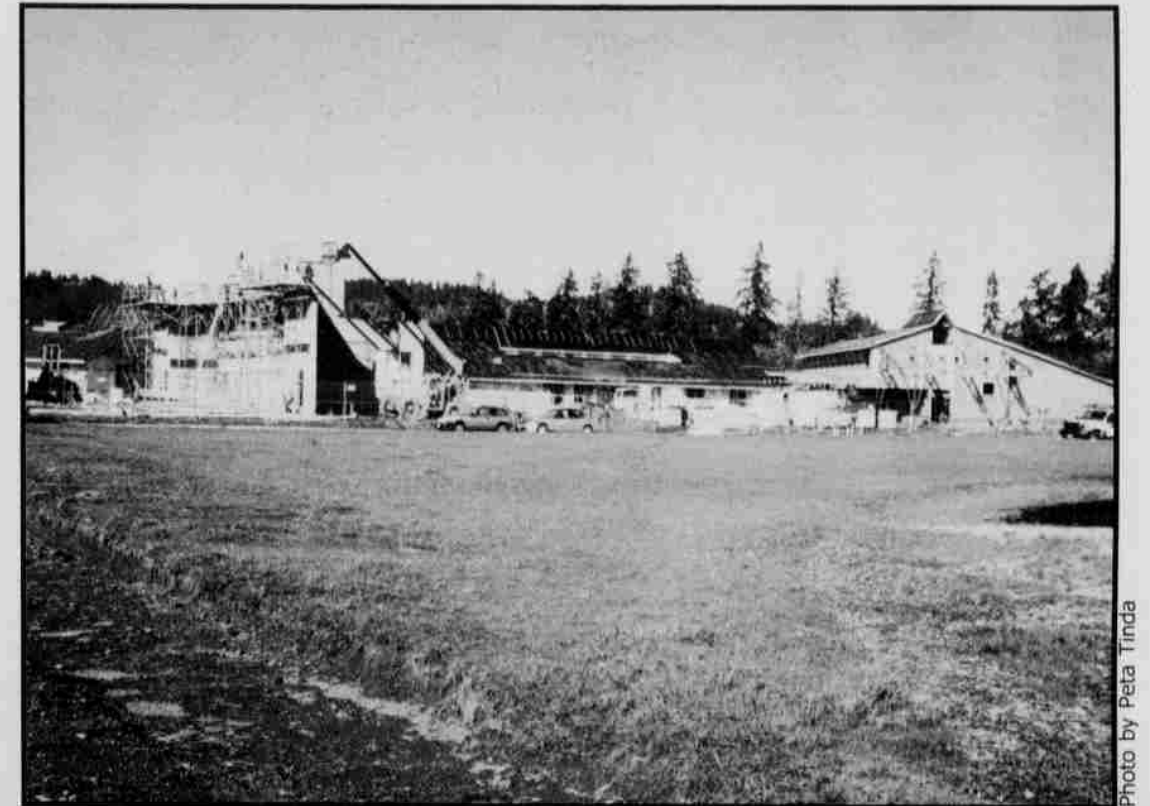
"The services offered here are the ones that can change peoples lives," she said.

Leno shares that cradle to grave education philosophy. The new building, which has programs for toddlers to college graduates, is well suited to provide life long resources.

"Education is a life long process. We have the programs to take them (Tribal members) from preschool to retirement. We offer support from 3 years old to 103," Leno said.



Our Children Will Benefit — Special guest Morrie Jimenez of the Klamath Tribe gave an opening prayer that involved the Tribe's Before and After Care children at the Open House.



Outdoor Play Area — The New Education campus has a large outdoor playing area to give the children plenty of room to roam around in.

