

Emergency Response Preparations

■ Ways the Tribe can get ready for natural disasters.

By Ron Karten

More than 60 Tribal health care workers packed the staff room upstairs at the Tribal Health Clinic recently to learn what they could do about preparations for a major catastrophe in the area.

With the disastrous federal and local responses to hurricanes Katrina and Rita lurking in the background, the Tribe's health officials learned a number of steps and exercises they could take to make the local response worthy of the people who live and work here.

With federal grants available to build a response team and the plans to make it effective, Yamhill County Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Maca noted that adherence to the federal program was necessary to actually receive the funds.

The complex plans require groups like the Tribe:

- to apply for federal grants;
- to develop and manage plans
- to respond to emergencies and mitigate problems;
- to host and participate in training courses;
- to develop and conduct exercises; and
- to prepare for and respond to disasters.

Yamhill County will work with those who ask for assistance on plan development, said Maca, who can be reached at 503 434-7469 or macab@co.yamhill.or.us.

Federal grants from the Depart-

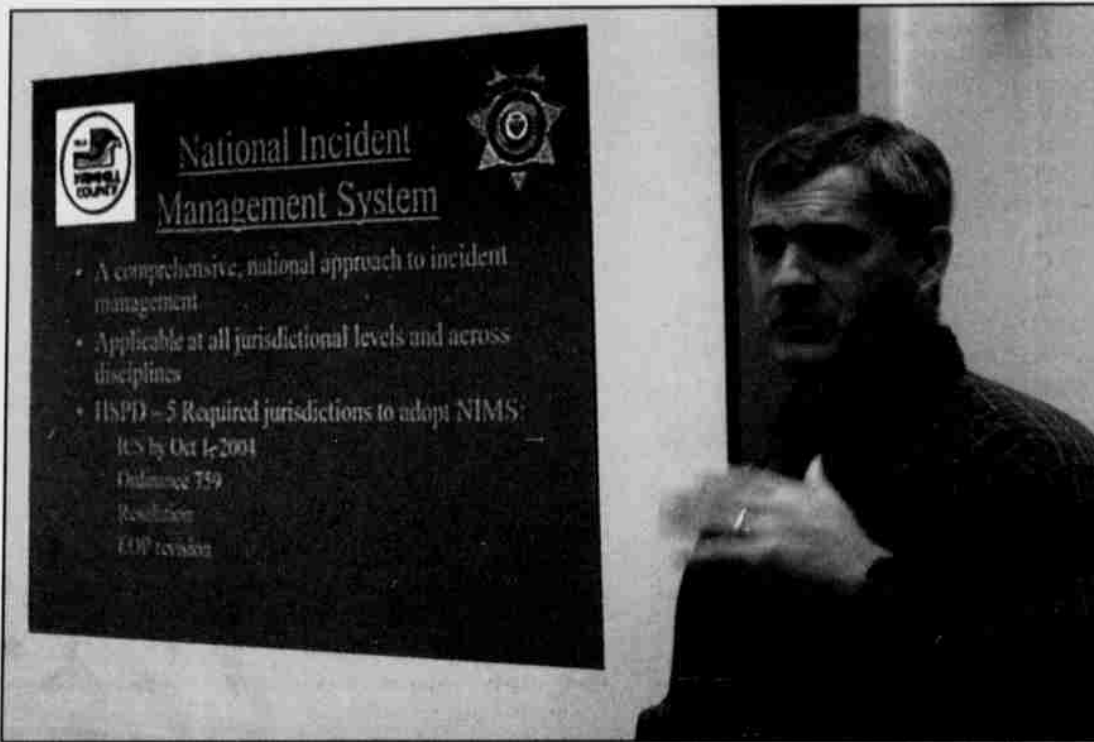
ment of Homeland Security will fund decontamination equipment, mobile data terminals, helicopter upgrades and radios for law enforcement and fire departments.

Hazard mitigation grants can be used to identify natural hazards in the county, to identify ways to mitigate natural hazards, to provide the foundation for FEMA grants to conduct mitigation projects including wildfire protection and bridge retrofits, and community involvement.

"Point people" and community groups are needed, said Maca. In an emergency, priority considerations should be family first, then neighbors and then community issues.

"You guys are out here on your own," said Maca, "geographically on your own," emphasizing how important it is that the local area name point people and form community groups.

The county offers good search and rescue teams, said Maca, particularly through Salvation Army and the Red Cross. One of the purposes of the visit to the Tribe's



Be Prepared — Yamhill County Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Maca spoke to a full house upstairs in the Health & Wellness Center recently. Maca described the county's strategy for handling major emergencies. The Tribe has received a \$40,000 grant to set up facilities for an emergency.

Photo by Toby McClary

Health Clinic, he said, was "to create and coordinate a medical response team."

Polk County, he said, is working on similar plans.

The Tribe has received a \$40,000 grant to set up facilities for an emergency, and \$20,000 in planning funds. Nancy May, Quality Improvement Specialist for the Health Clinic, is coordinating the grants.

Some members of the Tribe's

health care community already have given some thought to what they will do in an emergency.

"We looked at what if the family is split up at the time of an earthquake," said family physician Joe Whitson. "We've planned to call my wife's sister in Chicago as a contact point."

But Whitson knows that there is still plenty more to do in case of an emergency. "It's an on-going process," he said. ■

Portland State University Student Likes Mechanical Engineering, Motocross

■ Tribal member Jade Unger finds direction at Portland State University.

By Angie Sears
Tribal Mentee

As a senior getting ready to graduate from Portland State University, 26 year-old Tribal member Jade Unger is ready to put to use his knowledge of mechanical engineering with his enthusiasm for motocross in his search for a career with a major manufacturer of motocross bikes.

When Unger entered college as a

year off school to do some traveling, a little bit of soul searching, and decide his fate.

When Unger enrolled at Portland State University (PSU) as a junior his future was still unclear, but soon he discovered the world of mechanical engineering and the haze was quickly lifted.

"It was the challenge I had been looking for," he said. "Engineering is a difficult but rewarding field."

"It was the challenge I had been looking for. Engineering is a difficult but rewarding field," said Jade Unger. "I feel lucky to have the opportunity to combine what I love to do with my prospective field of employment."

freshman at the University of Oregon (U of O) he lacked the drive that he has today. Uncertain what he wanted to do with his life, he explored many possibilities.

"I had no direction," said Unger. "I tried to find my path by exploring all possible options that were available."

After two years of exploring his possibilities, Unger decided to leave the U of O. He returned home to Portland, where he would take a

Unger said there is a lot of development involved in building a motocross bike. He believes that with the increasing interest in motocross racing today, there is great potential for a mechanical engineer in the industry.

"I feel lucky to have the opportunity to combine what I love to do with my prospective field of employment," he said.

Unger began riding motocross at

an early age when he moved with his family to a wooded area of Forest Grove. His mother bought him a dirt bike and he stated riding with his friends.

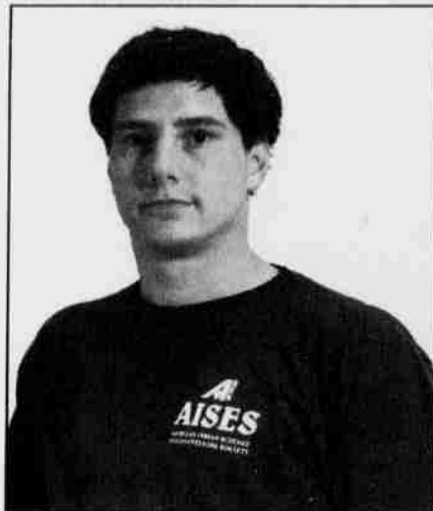
"I started racing with friends at age 13," he said. "From there I just couldn't stop."

He currently races on closed courses in Oregon and Washington, and has just advanced to an intermediate level in the 125-250 class (There are four levels of riders, the beginner, junior, intermediate, and professional).

Unger is a very involved student at PSU. He is a Co-President for the American Indian Science Engineering Society (AICES), and he also plays an active roll in three other societies. He is a member of the United Indian Students of Higher Education (UISHE), the American Society of Mechanical Engineering (ASME), and the Society of Automotive Engineers.

Currently, he is working with a group of five mechanical engineering students on a senior capstone project that involves the building of an open-wheeled Formula One style race car. He plans to race the car this summer at local race tracks.

Unger said one of the biggest obstacles he had to face was the transition from a rural high school to a



Jade Unger

Photo courtesy of Dale Peterson

college atmosphere. He wasn't prepared for college life. "I basically had to learn how to learn," he said.

But he was able to make this transition with a lot of support from his parents and his best friend Randy. He said whenever he would experience problems with school they would always encourage him to hang in there.

"They've been my motivation," Unger said. "My dad always told me to Buck Up; there are a lot of people who are worse off than I am. Look on the bright side would be the easiest way to put it." ■