



2005 — Tribal members Amanda Thomas, 17, and Ashlee Merrill, 18, received 2005 Gates Millennium Scholarships, which is a diversity scholarship meant to promote academic excellence among minority students, including American Indian and Alaskan Natives.

2000 — Tribal members Dakota Whitecloud and Monty Parazoo were profiled as the newest members of the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority's Board of Directors.

1995 — Tribal member Joann Mercier, owner of White Buffalo Trading Post, a craft and beadwork home-based business, was featured as Entrepreneur of the Month. In addition, she works for the Tribe as an Employment and Training counselor.

1990 — Nanitch Sahallie Food Services Coordinator Kathy Tom Aicher was featured. She and her staff of Karen Scharf and Tribal member Carol Nelson served 2,134 meals to 28 clients during an average month.

1985 — The Powwow Committee included Chairman Dean Mercier, Vice Chair Valarene Grout, Secretary Pat Gray, Assistant Secretary Angie Childers and Treasurer Candy Robertson. In addition, Ray McKnight was in charge of teepee poles and fundraising, Gray was in charge of posters and fliers, Mercier and Grout were handling traditional foods and Grout was in charge of the kitchen and food preparation.

Yesteryears is a look back at Tribal history in five-year increments through the pages of Smoke Signals.

Health committee plans meeting in Grand Ronde

The Oregon Health Improvement Plan Committee, which includes Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy as a member, will host a Community Listening Session in Grand Ronde from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, June 24, in the Tribal Community Center.

The session will gather public input, which will guide an action plan to improve the lifelong health of Oregonians as one of several Oregon Health Authority initiatives.

The Oregon Health Improvement Plan Committee is providing leadership, direction and oversight for the development of the Oregon Health Improvement Plan.

The committee is directed by the Oregon Health Policy Board, a nine-member governor-appointed board that provides guidance to the Oregon Health Authority.

The committee also will hold a meeting from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Friday, June 25, in the Tribal Community Center. The Friday gathering is a business meeting that anyone can attend and observe.

More information about the Health Improvement Plan Committee, as well as dates and locations for meetings, can be found at www.oregon.gov/OHA. ■

'Let's Talk' presentation tackles topic of sexually active youth

Willamina area leads county in rate of promiscuous teens

By Scarlett Holtz

Smoke Signals contributing writer

Oregon Department of Education Sexuality Education Specialist Brad Victor told audience members at the "Let's Talk" presentation held May 25 in Grand Ronde that the rate of sexually active teenagers in the Willamina School District is higher than the rate of sexually active teenagers throughout the rest of Yamhill County.

The number of youth who have had sexual intercourse has increased from 37 percent in 2001 to 45 percent in 2007, Victor said.

The number of youth who have experienced protected intercourse during that time span has decreased from 67 percent to 61 percent.

Teen pregnancy rates in 2008 for young women between the ages of 15-17 were at their highest peak of 27.8 percent in Yamhill County. The lowest rate of teen pregnancy during 2008 was in Coos County at 13.9 percent.

"A majority of our youth make bad choices," Victor said.

The reason behind these bad choices is lack of sex education.

"We, as adults, have to take responsibility for teaching our youth sex education," Victor added.

Adults do not, in general, take the time to inform their children about what choices they have when it comes to healthy relationships, he said.

Oregon has a bill that requires educators and schools to provide age-appropriate teaching to youth concerning sexual health beginning as young as kindergarten.

Michelle Andrews, Willamina School District health teacher and school representative, said she is concerned about the lack of sex education in the schools today.

Andrews discussed different workshops available concerning adolescent sexual health. She said

her goal is to get new sex education curriculum for Willamina Middle and High schools this upcoming school year.

Andrews also informed those present that there is a free clinic on school property in Willamina. The clinic is for youth and has been available for some time.

"We will talk with teens about safe sex as well as abstinence," Andrews said. "We will provide condoms as well, with the understanding that we will also contact their parents."

Rick Brainard, vice principal for Faulconer/Chapman School in Sheridan, discussed a new health program they are working on in the Sheridan School District.

"It is our goal to introduce a new health and sex education program as well as new and improved curriculum for the upcoming 2010-11 school year," Brainard said.

"The new proposed books for the Faulconer/Chapman schools are targeted toward the sixth and seventh grades. However, there will be another new set of books for the upper classmen as well."

"I believe the theme of this presentation," said Gina Farrell from Planned Parenthood in Portland, is "Get involved."

Farrell has been working with Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Youth Education Program Manager Molly Matthews for some time now.

Matthews said she was pleased with the turnout for the presentation. Nineteen people — youth and adults — attended.

Matthews said she is also concerned about a much-needed sex education program for Tribal youth as well.

"We need to get the message out to the parents that if we do not teach our youth about safe healthy relationships, they will look to their peers for what to do next," Matthews said. ■

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For more information about this Program, please contact the Tribal Court Program Specialist at the address listed below.

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Chief Seattle, 1854

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