

By the book



Photo by Ron Karten

Tribal member and Cultural Resources Program Manager Kathy Cole takes out the first of this latest shipment of Chinuk Wawa dictionaries with Tribal member and Cultural Education Specialist Brian Krehbiel standing by. A group of about nine Tribal staff members, many from Education and Cultural Resources, came down to the old Willamina Middle School on Friday, Jan. 6, to help unload the latest shipment of dictionaries from publisher Our Town Press in Salem. This truckload carried 3,120 copies of the 5,000-book run. With 12 books to a box and 65 boxes to a pallet, the dictionaries were unloaded in less than 30 minutes.

Chinuk Wawa classes offered

The Tribe's Cultural Education Department offers adult Chinuk Wawa language classes from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday in Room 207 of the Tribal Education Building.

Language classes can be taken for college credit or for fun. For more information, call 503-879-2249 or 503-437-4599. ■

Chinuk Family Night set for Jan. 31

A Chinuk Family Night will be held at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 31, at the new Youth Education Center.

The evening will include Chinuk-based activities and conversation.

Dinner will be provided and each attending family will receive a Chinuk family activity to take home.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Esther Stewart at 503-879-1443 or esther.stewart@grandronde.org. ■

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Tribal education is making way into mainstream

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to produce a small book in the language of Grand Ronde's Tribal ancestors. "Something most adults could probably do by end of the year," she said.

Ebensteiner put together a book about bears while Tribal member Codie Haller, a sophomore, created a book on giraffes.

Cole also has taught the language to both pre-schoolers and adults in Tribal Education classrooms. Years ago, she taught the language for two years to a kindergarten class of 28 at Willamina Elementary School.

Little by little, Tribal education efforts are making their way into mainstream settings. The success is coming on the tails of many Tribal education and culture programs.

Among the students, for example, Jade Colton is granddaughter of former Tribal Elder Jackie Whisler, who started Chinuk Wawa classes at the Tribe and walked on in 2007.

"That makes it special," said Cole.

For Colton, her language and cultural education had an early start with the help of her grandmother. Jade's sister, Tribal member Justine Colton, has been similarly motivated. She is now taking Chinuk

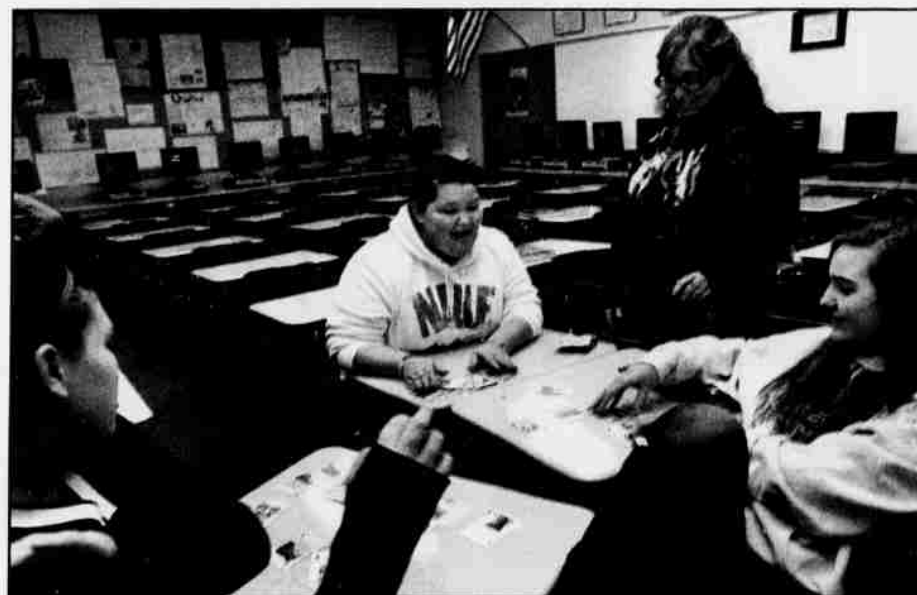


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal members Kayla Grijalva, left, Codie Haller, middle, and Zoey Holsclaw, right, play the card game Go Fish during their Chinuk Wawa class at Willamina High School in Willamina on Thursday, Jan. 5. Kathy Cole, second from right, Cultural Resources Department program manager and Tribal member, who teaches the class, looks on. The students were required to use Chinuk Wawa during the game, which was a good exercise with helping them learn numbers in the Tribe's native tongue.

Wawa classes at Lane Community College.

Both sisters participated in internships at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, where Tomanowos, the ancient Willamette meteorite, is on display.

Their father, Tribal member

Mike Colton, who works at Spirit Mountain Casino, has asked them to teach him the language as their skills improve.

Tribal member Zoey Holsclaw, a sophomore in the class, has been involved in the Tribal Canoe Family. Her sister, Ali, also a Tribal member, teaches Chinuk Wawa at

the Tribal Education Department.

Tribal member and sophomore Rilee Mercier took the course in Tribal pre-school years ago, but signed up again because she "wanted to learn more about the language." She also continues to learn about Tribal culture through Tribal Youth Education programs.

"Every person is different," said Cole, "but it takes dedication. That's for sure. We're surrounded by English, so you really have to make a choice that you're going to speak Chinuk."

"The goal is getting families to speak it at home," she said. That is encouraged in adult Chinuk Wawa classes and at quarterly Chinuk Family Nights, which are funded by a grant.

"It's going great," said Cole. "They're learning very quickly. In fact, I have to keep creating new curriculum. They're really picking it up."

The class includes Tribal history and culture as well as language, and includes stories about Elders who have come before today's students.

One of the things that make the class better, said Ebensteiner, is Cole's interactive style, which prompts student participation.

"I've also taken some of Eula Petite's lessons and translated them into Chinuk lessons," Cole said. ■