

Goal is to raise awareness of food issues

MEETING continued from front page

food bank that serves more than 40,000 people in need, including 14,000 children. People receive food through the organization's food share network, which includes the Tribe's iskam məkʰmək haws food pantry on Grand Ronde Road.

A food access meeting called "Let's Talk About Food" was held in Grand Ronde on Thursday, Jan. 28, at the Tribe's Adult Education building.

A dinner of beef stew and fry-bread was provided to as many as 40 guests and topics up for discussion included access to grocery stores, gardening alternatives and progress, learning more about hunger and volunteer opportunities.

The audience included Tribal Elders, Tribal members, community members and staff members. Tribal Council member Denise Harvey attended as did Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Kathleen George and her husband, Planning Department Manager Rick George.

The stew was provided by DeLoe and her kitchen staff and the fry-bread was made by Tribal Elder Faye Smith.

Stickel, who is the Marion-Polk Food Share Community Assistant coordinator, led the discussion along with Mercier as they played the role of hosts and facilitators.

"We have been meeting for a year now to talk about food access," said Stickel. "Tonight we will have an open discussion of ideas and then we will prioritize."

Stickel and her staff jotted down ideas from the roundtable discussions on large notepads and posted them to the wall community meeting-style.

"I'm glad to see this many people

here tonight. Our goal is to raise awareness," said Mercier. "There is a food revolution going on across the country."

Dixon-McDonald said that Marion-Polk Food Share is trying to look at the bigger issues related to access of quality food. He is Marion-Polk Food Share's director of programs.

"Francene has done an amazing job as we have all seen with that facility (iskam məkʰmək haws)," said Dixon-McDonald. "From the beginning we have wanted to do more as an organization. We are interested in looking at the bigger picture of food access, at the economic issues, at the poverty issues and at ways that we can be a part of some longer term solutions to the problem of food insecurity and food access."

Dixon-McDonald said that Marion-Polk Food Share focuses on providing emergency food assistance and working with families living on limited resources to increase self-sufficiency in relation to accessing food resources.

"Our goal is to listen to you all, listen to the community and invite you to join us make healthy food more accessible," said Dixon-McDonald. "We want to listen and understand what the needs are and what the challenges are here in Grand Ronde and to figure out ways to support that."

Mercier and Stickel shared the results of a survey sent to area residents in 2015 asking about food resources and access to healthy food.

Stickel said the Food Access and Nutrition Survey told the FACT Team that 79 percent of area residents travel between 10 and 20 miles to shop for food. The survey also revealed that as many as 48 percent of the 222 respondents

said they have to travel more than 20 miles to access quality, healthy food.

Mercier said the group's effort is an intergovernmental collaboration that will benefit the entire community, not just members of the Tribe.

Stickel said that 90 percent of the survey respondents said they get their food from a large grocery store and that 83 percent rely on their personal vehicle to get food.

"Our goal is to raise awareness of food issues and through our efforts increase access to affordable and nutritious food to the residents of the West Valley," said Mercier. "The survey identified the desire for a grocery store as a top concern and one of the things we learned is that transportation issues are big out here."

Mercier said that 52 percent of survey respondents want a large grocery store in Grand Ronde and yet 49 percent said the cost of healthy food is a barrier to a healthy lifestyle.

Also, the survey found that 50 percent said they wanted more fresh fruits and vegetables at the local corner market.

Mercier said that food deserts are mostly located in rural areas and that Indian Reservations are home to some of the most remote food deserts in the nation.

"A food desert is when you don't

have access to nutritious foods," said Mercier. "There are very few places where there is no food; it's just a question of 'Do you have healthy, affordable food?' That's the whole goal of the FACT Team and this meeting; 'What can we as a community do to improve food access and have better food options?'"

Roundtable discussions focused on barriers to food, current resources in the community that provide food options and opportunities to improve food access.

Mercier said the FACT Team will continue to meet monthly and that they would be looking to work with the Tribe's Culture Committee to see if there was a possibility of the two groups combining efforts on the annual First Foods Ceremony.

Audience members then placed colored dots on the posted notes indicating which ideas they supported the most. The top ideas, according to the audience members present, were establishing a local grocery store in the image of Safeway or a larger market store.

The idea of resurrecting or re-emphasizing local hunting and fishing classes and after-school clubs received the second most interest and local events like a food fair or a chef's competition featuring chefs from Spirit Mountain Casino also received many votes. ■

CPA returning to Grand Ronde

Doris Rose, a certified public accountant, will be returning to the Grand Ronde community.

She will be in the Grand Ronde Housing Department office on Tuesday and Thursday through April 5 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. She will be at the Portland office, 4445 S.W. Barbur Blvd., from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24.

To schedule an appointment, call 503-293-4128. ■

Softball practice



Contributed photo

Raven Harmon, left, and Tribal members Anesia Ainam, second from left, Amaryssa Mooney, second from right, and Amelia Mooney, right, participated in a softball workout with Teresa Wilson, middle, in Clackamas recently. Wilson has coached at many colleges, including the University of Oregon, and was named the National Collegiate Athletic Association National and Pac-10 Coach of the Year in 1989 when she was head coach of the Ducks' softball team. She was also the head coach of the 2005 USA Elite National Team. Wilson is currently the coach of Tribal member Kaelynn Simmons' Northwest Batbusters softball team and that connection gave the other girls an opportunity to practice with her. The girls are putting to use the skills they learned from Wilson now and have dreams of playing college-level softball.

If you suffer from: neck or back pain, headaches, have been injured or seek wellness care for your family, chiropractic care may benefit you!

CALL (971) 266-3450 or go to nunleychiropractic.com to schedule an appointment!



*We accept most insurance, including the Shasta tribal plan in addition to cash patients.

- AVAILABLE TREATMENTS:
- spinal & extremity adjustments
 - soft tissue massage
 - trigger point therapy
 - hot packs
 - therapeutic ultrasound
 - electric muscle stimulation
 - therapeutic exercises

Dr. Ashley Nunley, DC is a Grand Ronde tribal member providing chiropractic care at:

Grand Ronde Health & Wellness: 9-5 every Mon & Wed
Portland Satellite Office: 9-5 every Tuesday