

4,273 CANS OF SALMON LATER...



Neah-Kah-Nie High School students and personnel gather in the school's woodshop room to label cans of Coho salmon for food banks in Tillamook County.

It's a real hands-on experience for NKN High students labeling cans

By **DAVE FISHER • The Citizen**

Think 4,273 cans of Coho salmon is a lot of salmon? Just ask students at Neah-Kah-Nie High School who helped attach labels to each and every can.

Students put the final touches on the North County Food Bank's canned salmon program that began at the Nehalem Fish Hatchery and Waterhouse Falls fish trap a few weeks earlier and ended up on local food bank shelves.

The Coho harvest program to help feed Tillamook County's hungry, now in its second year, is a collaborative effort between the food bank, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Tillamook Bay Boathouse in Garibaldi. Spearheading the effort on behalf of the food bank were local residents Bill Campbell and Mike Ehlen along with a handful of other dedicated volunteers.

NKN students got into the act when it came time to produce a label for the cans of fish. School counselor Peggy Campbell, wife of Bill, helped orchestrate the effort and instructor Brad Gerard's graphic design students created seven different labels as a class project. Directors of the North County Food Bank selected the winning design, which was announced at a pep assembly.

Senior Brad Corser, whose design was chosen to adorn the cans, came away with a sense of satisfaction. "It was a fun project," said Corser, who, along with his classmates had never designed a canned-foods label.

"It was a direct application of what students learned in class," said Gerards, Neah-Kah-Nie High's business and technology instructor, now in his sixth year with the district. "Students

also enjoyed the community involvement aspect of the project."

The school's woodshop classroom was a beehive of activity late October and early November as students, armed with glue sticks, attached labels to the cans.

"It's amazing how many cans you can label when you have 15 sets of hands working together," said Jim



Neah-Kah-Nie senior Jake Corser designed the label for the canned salmon destined for Tillamook County food banks.

Cox, woodshop and construction trades instructor, whose students, along with Leo's Club members, did the lion's share of labeling.

As for the final numbers, Bill Campbell reported 740 fish — 540 from Waterhouse Falls and 200 from the North Fork Hatchery — were received this year, up dramatically from last year. "We had to decline additional fish from the North Fork Hatchery as we were concerned about raising funds to offset the cost of

processing," Campbell told the Citizen. "The fish in this run appeared to be larger and heavier than those in 2009, between 10-20 percent heavier, adding to the volume."

A total of 4,273 cans, 7.5-oz. in size, were produced and labeled by NKN High School students. The North County Food Bank elected to distribute 1,800 cans and to have the balance provided to the Tillamook Regional Food Bank, the regional food bank that serves an additional 28 organizations in Tillamook County.

In addition, 31 fresh cut Coho salmon fillets were delivered to the Nehalem Bay House and Kilchis House adult care center to provide meals for the residents.

Meanwhile, another 1,280 pounds of frozen salmon fillets are in cold storage at the Tillamook Bay Boathouse pending processing and canning, which will yield an estimated 2,560 additional cans.

"They will be processed once we receive further donations to offset costs," said Campbell. Some of those fillets may find their way, once again, to the adult care centers.

Fund raising efforts, said Campbell, have provided \$5,864 to date. "We are working diligently on raising the additional funds to meet costs, ranging from \$4,021 to \$4,154, and are in contact with several organizations that have pledged or indicated a direct interest in assisting the project. The support and contributions from the North County community has been absolutely terrific."

Campbell is already thinking about next year, admitting, "We're still learning as we go," as are students at Neah-Kah-Nie High School who have signed on as volunteer partners in what has become an annual community project.