JANUARY 1, 2021



SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA, MOLALLA, ROGUE RIVER, KALAPUYA, CHASTA

AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE, SMOKESIGNALS.ORG

Tribe begins administering COVID-19 vaccine

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

he Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde started administering the highly anticipated COVID-19 vaccine just before Christmas.

Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe said the Tribe's Health & Wellness Center received 200 doses of the recently approved Moderna vaccine on Tuesday, Dec. 22.

"I am very happy to say we received the first allotment of the Moderna vaccine and we are starting to vaccinate clinic personnel, Tribal first responders, then adult foster care workers



and residents, so we can start getting some herd immunity built up," she said.

As of 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 23, approximately 20 essential health care workers at the Tribe had received their first dose of the vaccine,

including Rowe.

"I had mine this morning and had no side effects," Rowe said.

She said that only 20 doses would be administered per day in case side effects resulted in essential clinic personnel having to stay home sick.

"We don't want to potentially have an entire department out," she said. "We have identified staff who want the vaccine as priority and working toward the ones who are 'maybes' and then

See VACCINE continued on page 8

Tribe received \$45 million in CARES Act funding in '20

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

he Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde received more than \$45 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funding in 2020, according to the federal government website www.usaspending.gov.

The Tribe received a combined \$44 million from the Treasury Department in three payments and \$1.56 million from the Department of the Interior.

The Tribe used approximately 42 percent of that emergency funding – \$19.3 million – to fund a COVID-19 Relief Payment program that sent a total of \$4,400 to each adult Tribal member in eight monthly payments from April through November.

The relief payments approved on March 18 were designed to help Tribal members adversely affected by the nationwide economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of quarterly per capita payments in June and September after Spirit Mountain Casino closed for 74 days from mid-March through May 31.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has presented everyone with challenges that we couldn't anticipate," Tribal Communications Director Sara Thompson said. "The CARES Act funding has helped us provide for our Tribal members, students, community and staff during a year

See CARES ACT continued on page 5

Welcome to the Hotel Willamina



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal member Matt Haller stands outside of the Wildwood Hotel and Restaurant in Willamina on Tuesday, Dec. 15. Haller and his wife, April, purchased the hotel and restaurant in October. The restaurant is currently takeout only, but the hotel's six rooms are available.

Tribal member Matt Haller purchases Wildwood and restaurant

Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

ILLAMINA — After being shuttered for almost six months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Wildwood Hotel and adjoining restaurant are open for business, albeit with limited services for the time being.

The hotel and restaurant were purchased by

Grand Ronde Tribal member Matt Haller, 37, and his wife, April, who are also lifelong West Valley residents.

"The previous owners (Meredith and Katie Kendall) made it possible for us to purchase this," Haller

See WILDWOOD continued on page 9

General Council meeting

11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 3

Being held remotely using the Zoom teleconferencing program.

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings

Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed.

LETTERS

Dear Smoke Signals:

The family of Brent Merrill appreciates and thanks you for the wonderful article you published. Our family has received compliments of Brent for his many accomplishments highlighted in your writing.

Our gratitude to Harris Reibach; professor at Willamette University Robert W. Collin; Steve Bobb Sr.; Joe Kirk; drummers Bobby and Nakoa Mercier, Santi Atanacio and Izaiah Fisher; prayer Isabelle and Sophia Grout; flute Donn Grishaber; video and music Carter Tollis; Shari for her loving care at his most needed time; and Jo Ann Empey for calming my soul.

Donna Stronach

Roll No. 12

Dear Smoke Signals:

I attended the virtual General Council meeting on Dec. 6, 2020, and was impressed and powerfully moved by the presentation from Spirit Mountain Community Fund.

SMCF provides small and large competitive grants to nonprofit organizations as a philanthropic investment in communities throughout 11 Oregon counties. Additionally, they make available grants to the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon and government agencies in Polk and Yamhill counties.

I have worked with several nonprofit organizations in Oregon that were successful in receiving SMCF grants, and the impact that they have had – even on the smallest organization working with minimal funding - creates a positive and direct effect on at-risk youth services, homelessness prevention, food security, behavioral and mental community health, autism research and clinical facilities, shelter services for abused women and children, and much, much more.

SMCF is a name that all Oregon nonprofit organizations know, and our Tribe and every Tribal member is lifted up because of the generosity and spirit of giving that we have as a people. In the areas of arts and culture, education, environmental preservation, health, historic preservation, problem gaming and public safety, SMCF continues to give despite the current challenges of the pandemic, and I continue to be proud to be a part of it.

Thank you, Michael Cherry, and SMCF staff and Board of Trustees for doing an amazing job at helping our neighbors and friends in our communities. In doing so, we are helping all of us.

Charles G. Haller II

Roll No. 1032

Massage at Health & Wellness Center

Mind, Body & Soul Therapeutic Massage started at the Health & managed by the Health & Wellness Center staff.

To schedule an appointment, call 971-237-2561. ■

Clothes Closet open Friday afternoons

The Clothes Closet is open from 3 to 6 p.m. Fridays on the Tribal campus near the Elders Activity Center at the end of Blacktail Drive.

The change in hours will better serve the community so people do not have to choose between going to the Grand Ronde Food Bank or the Clothes Closet. It also will be open and available to those who work.

The Clothes Closet accepts clothing, small appliances, small pieces of furniture, electronics and household goods that are clean and in good condition. It does not accept books, large TVs or furniture, but there is a community board where people can post those items.

For more information or emergency clothes, contact Lori Walker-Hernandez at 559-847-7565. ■

TRIBAL OFFICE CLOSURES

Tribal offices will be closed Monday, Jan. 18, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr Day. Offices also will be closed Monday, Feb. 15, in observance of Tribal Chiefs' Day.

smok signəlz

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
MONDAY, JAN. 11	JAN. 15, 2021
MONDAY, JAN. 25	FEB. 1, 2021
MONDAY, FEB. 8	FEB. 15, 2021
MONDAY, FEB. 22	MARCH 1, 2021

EDITORIAL POLICY

smok signalz, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, is published twice a month. No portion of this publication may be reprinted

Our editorial policy is intended to encourage input from Tribal members and readers about stories printed in the Tribal newspaper. However, all letters received must be signed by the author, an address must be given and a phone number or e-mail address must be included for verification purposes. Full addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless requested. Letters must be 400 words or less.

smok signalz reserves the right to edit letters and to refuse letters that are determined to contain libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals, staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Letters to the editor are the opinions and views of the writer. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of smok signalz.



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smok signəlz **JANUARY 1, 2021**

N THE FUTURE



<u>January</u>

- Sunday, Jan. 3 General Council meeting, 11 a.m., using the Zoom teleconferencing program.
- Wednesday, Jan. 13 Tribal Council meeting, 10 a.m., Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Monday, Jan. 18 Tribal offices closed in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.
- Wednesday, Jan. 27 Tribal Council meeting, 10 a.m., Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.

- Sunday, Feb. 7 General Council meeting, 11 a.m., using the Zoom teleconferencing program.
- Wednesday, Feb. 10 Tribal Council meeting, 10 a.m., Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Monday, Feb. 15 Tribal offices closed in observance of Tribal Chiefs' Day holiday.
- Wednesday, Feb. 24 Tribal Council meeting, 10 a.m., Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304

(Editor's note: All events are tentative depending on the status of the Tribe's COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic response.)

LIHEAP program open in service area

The Tribal Social Service's LIHEAP - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program – is open to eligible Tribal members in the six-county service area and Clackamas County.

This is a first-come, first-served program and income criteria applies. LIHEAP is federally funded through the Department of Health and Human Services and is designed to help low-income households with home heating costs.

For more information, contact Social Services at 503-879-2034. ■

Find us on



Ad by Samuel Briggs III

OFFICIAL TRIBAL FACEBOOK PAGES

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Grand Ronde Community Garden:

facebook.com/GrandRondeCommunityGarden

Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department:

facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Tribal-Police-Department

Arson suspect's trial set for Feb. 3

OREGON CITY— The trial for the man suspected of setting the Grand Ronde Tribe's Blue Heron property on fire on Dec. 5 is tentatively set for Wednesday, Feb. 3.

Enrique Omar Mejia, 29, has been indicted on one count each of first-degree arson, second-degree arson, second-degree burglary, second-degree criminal trespass and second-degree disorderly conduct by a Clackamas County grand jury.

First-degree arson is a Class A felony and Measure 11 offense punishable by a mandatory minimum prison sentence.



Enrique Omar Meiia

Mejia allegedly placed 18 people in "danger of physical injury," according to the indictment.

He remains in the Clackamas County Jail in Oregon City on \$100,000 bail. He was denied a conditional release by Circuit Court Judge Susie Norby because he had a previous failure to appear, the serious felony charge, having previous adult convictions and being unemployed.

ATTENTION TRIBAL MEMBERS ON THE TRIBAL SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)/DISABILITY (SSD) & MEDICARE PART B REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAMS

It's time to send us a copy of your "2021" Social Security award letter *If you haven't received your "2021" Social Security award letter yet, please contact the Social Security Administration (SSA) at 1-800-772-1213 or online at www.ssa.gov

*Your "2021" SSA award must reach our office by 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, 2021, to avoid future delays in your benefits.

Please send a copy of your "2021" SSA letter to:

CTGR Member Services Attn: Shannon Simi 9615 Grand Ronde Road Grand Ronde, OR 97347

E-mail: Shannon.simi@grandronde.org - Fax: 503-879-2480 -Phone: 503-879-1358 or 1-800-242-0232, ext. 1358

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the Tribal member to notify the Tribe of any changes in your benefits from the Social Security Administration SSI/SSD program. Failure to submit your annual SSA letter and/or notify the Tribe of any changes may result in an obligation to repay ineligible benefits received and/or interrupt or delay your Tribal Supplemental Security Income & Disability payments and Medicare Part B reimbursements.

THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE



INDIGENT DEFENSE PROGRAM

The Tribal Court is actively seeking attorneys for our Indigent Defense Program to represent parents and children involved in neglect and abuse cases within the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court.

If interested please contact the Tribal Court:

Shane Thomas Tribal Court Programs Coordinator

9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347 Phone: 503-879-4623 Fax: 503-879-2269

shane.thomas@grandronde.org



www.grandronde.org/government/tribal-court

Food Bank news

The Grand Ronde Food Bank – iskam məkhmək haws – is operated by Marion-Polk Food Share, which has been leading the fight to end hunger since 1987 because no one should be hungry.

Recipients of SNAP, TANF, SSI or LIHEAP assistance automatically qualify for assistance at the Grand Ronde Food Bank, 9675 Grand Ronde Road. No one will be turned away in need of a food box.

"We believe that everyone deserves to have enough to eat," Food Bank Coordinator Francene Ambrose says. "You are welcome to get a food box at each of our regular weekly distributions. No one will be turned away in need of a food box."

In reaction to the continuing COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the Food Bank will hold January food box distributions on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. starting on Jan. 8. The Food Bank is closed Friday, Jan. 1, in observance of the New Year's Day holiday.

"We are asking clients to not come for a food box if they are having any symptoms or concerned about their health," Ambrose said. "We are limiting our geographic service area to Sheridan to Otis on Highway 18 and Sheridan to Hebo on Highway 22. We are asking clients and volunteers to wash their hands immediately upon entry to the building. Our lobby is closed until further notice.

"Food box distribution is happening outside while maintaining a safe distance between clients. We are sanitizing and keeping the food quarantined for three days before distribution. Pre-made boxes are available on distribution days, limited to two days of food for two adults. Clients within our geographic service area are still welcome to visit us weekly."

People must check in 15 minutes before closing to receive a food box. If you need immediate assistance, call 211 or visit 211info.org.

Those who are unable to pick up a food box can fill out an authorized representative form and that designated person can pick up a food box on your behalf. The authorization is good for one year.

The Food Bank is continuing the Farm Share Rx program with 35 farm shares being distributed from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays. It is a first-come, first-served distribution until the shares are depleted.

The Food Bank continues to seek volunteers to help with repacking food, putting food on the shelves, handing out food boxes, end-of-month inventory and picking up food donations at area stores.

Call to ensure someone is available to assist. People also can sign up for a monthly e-mail for the Food Bank calendar and events, as well as follow the Food Bank on Facebook.

The Food Bank is an equal opportunity provider.

Call Ambrose at 503-879-3663 or contact her at fambrose@marionpolkfoodshare.org for more information or to volunteer. ■

Committee & Special Event Board meeting days and times

- Ceremonial Hunting Board meets as needed. Chair: Marline Groshong.
- Culture Committee meets at 5:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the Grand Ronde Food Bank/iskam məkhmək haws, 9675 Grand Ronde Road. Chair: Francene Ambrose.
- Editorial Board meets monthly. The next meeting will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, Jan 22, 2021, using the Zoom conferencing program. Chair: Siobhan Taylor. Contact: Editorial.Board@grandronde.org.
- Education Committee meets at 5:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month in the Adult Education building. Chair: Tammy Cook.
- Elders Committee meets at 10 a.m. the third Wednesday of the month in the Elders Activity Center. Chair: Penny DeLoe.
- **Enrollment Committee** meets quarterly in Room 204 of the Governance Center. Chair: Debi Anderson.
- Fish & Wildlife Committee meets at 5:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the Natural Resources building off Hebo Road. Chair: Bryan Langley.
- **Health Committee** meets at 10 a.m. the second Tuesday of the month in the Molalla Room of the Health & Wellness Center. Chair: Bernadine Shriver.
- Housing Grievance Board meets at 4 p.m. the third Thursday of the month in the Housing Department conference room. Chair: Simone Auger.
- Powwow Special Event Board meets monthly at noon at the Community Center.
 Dates vary. Contact Dana Ainam at 503-879-2037. Chair: Dana Ainam.
- **TERO Commission** meets at 10 a.m. the first Monday of the month in the Employment Services building. Chair: Russell Wilkinson.
- **Timber Committee** meets at 5 p.m. the second Thursday of the month at the Natural Resources building off Hebo Road. Interim Chair: Jon R. George.
- Veterans Special Event Board meets at 5:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month in the old Elders Craft House. Chair: Rich VanAtta.

To update information on this list, contact Publications Coordinator Dean Rhodes at 503-879-1463 or dean.rhodes@grandronde.org.

(Editor's note: All committee and special event board in-person meetings have been suspended during the Tribe's reaction to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.)



2016 – The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde finalized purchase of the 31-acre Multnomah Greyhound Park site in Wood Village. The Tribe closed on the property in December. The site, which was no longer used for dog racing, was listed for sale at \$11.2 million in 2015. "Economic diversification has always been a priority for our Tribe and our membership," Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno said. "We have worked hard since our Tribe was restored to become self-sufficient, and to provide essential programs for our members. Striving toward a diversified economy is an objective that helps us prepare for the future."

2011—The Tribal plankhouse received a name. "achaf-hammi" is a Tualatin-Kalapuya word meaning "a house built of cedar planks." The name was finalized in December, said Tribal member Bobby Mercier, the Tribe's language and cultural specialist. Henry Zenk, an anthropologist and friend



File photo

of the Tribe, helped with the translation.

2006 – Tribal Elder Steve Bobb Sr. created a memorial to loggers who lost their lives on the job. His work, "View from the Top," was a bronze statue of a logger at the top of a large tree and was put on display at Coyote Joe's restaurant in Willamina. The idea came to Bobb while he and wife Connie were driving home to Willamina from the Oregon coast, and the couple saw a memorial dedicated to fishermen lost at sea. "So I thought, why couldn't we do that same thing with people who had lost their lives in the timber industry?" Bobb said.

2001 – Tribal member Tim Holmes was awarded the Paul G. Hearne Award for leadership. "It's a tremendous honor to be selected," Holmes said. "I would have never dreamed of it." The awards program was established in 1999 in honor of the founder of the American Association of People with Disabilities. The program recognized emerging leaders with disabilities who demonstrated leadership while having a positive impact on the community of people with disabilities.

1996 – The Tribe's Education Department hosted 30 representatives of the Oregon Indian Education Council, an advisory board to the Oregon Department of Education. Participants were welcomed by Tribal Council Chair Mark Mercier and Vice Chair Kathryn Harrison. Tasks that the OIEC was looking to undertake included establishing of partnerships with school districts and educational institutions, supporting cultural competence training for teachers, and advocating for Indian education.

1991 – The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde was putting together a two-part survey to assess the needs and desires of the Tribal population. One questionnaire was designed to collect socioeconomic, demographic and health-related information concerning 1,000 Tribal households. The other questionnaire would assess attitudes of 600 randomly selected Tribal member adults toward economic development plans in the service area that included Yamhill, Polk, Marion, Multnomah, Washington and Tillamook counties.

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

Community Health Program

Medical Transport Services

Medical transportation services are available to Tribal members within the six-county service area when an alternate means of transportation is not available. Advance notice required.

Please call 503-879-2078 to schedule a reservation.



smok signəlz **JANUARY 1, 2021**

Tribal Council OKs 2021 spending plan

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved the spending plan for 2021 that reflects a 0.9 percent decrease in expenditures from 2020 during its Wednesday, Dec. 16, meeting.

The draft budget was detailed for Tribal members in the November Tilixam Wawa and explained by Tribal Finance Officer Chris Leno in executive session during the Nov. 1 General Council meeting.

Leno said that there were two comments received from the membership during the comment period that ran through Wednesday, Dec.

During the Tuesday, Dec. 15, Legislative Action Committee meeting, Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier recalled the days of when the Tribe would approve its annual budget on the afternoon of Dec. 31. Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George thanked all staff members involved in putting together the 2021 spending plan.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved the 161-page Portland Harbor final supplemental restoration plan and environmental assessment, which evaluates and selects specific restoration alternatives and potential environmental effects of those alternatives. The Tribe is one of the trustees for natural resource assessment within the Portland Harbor superfund site;
- Approved a contract with Salem Radiology Consultants to review certain dental X-rays for the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center;
- Approved a Tribal credit card with a \$5,000 limit for Warriors of Hope Program Manager Danielle

Murrell to use in the performance of her job duties;

- Re-appointed Tribal Council member Michael Langley as the Tribe's representative on the Mid-Willamette Valley Area Commission on Transportation with a term ending in December 2022;
- Re-appointed Tribal Council member Denise Harvey as the Tribe's principal delegate to the National Indian Gaming Association and the paying of the \$25,000 in annual dues;
- And approved the re-enrollment of one person and the enrollment of seven new non-infants because they meet the requirements outlined in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

Also included in the Dec. 16 packet was an approved authorization to proceed that suspended all debt withholdings for the December per capita payment.

During a special Tribal Council meeting held on Tuesday, Dec. 22, Tribal Council approved investing in the Baird Capital Global Fund II account and signed off on easements, covenants, conditions and restrictions at the Chemawa Station property in Keizer that is co-owned with the Siletz Tribe.

Tribal Finance Officer Chris Leno said the Tribe has already invested in Baird's Global Fund I account and is moving its funds into the new fund. Senior Staff Attorney Deneen Aubertin Keller said a similar Chemawa Station declaration will be approved by the Siletz Tribal

To watch the entire meeting, visit the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and click on Government and then Videos. ■

Holiday box prep



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

From left, Tribal member Lynn Robertson, community member Roger Schaff, Tribal descendant Laura Mix and Tribal member Claudia Leno fill holiday food boxes at the Grand Ronde Food Bank – iskam məkhmək haws - on Monday, Dec. 14. Approximately 600 holiday food boxes were distributed to 300 families on Saturday, Dec. 19.

Afterhours health line

Tribal members can contact the Afterhours Health Line for guestions about health care concerns they may have when the clinic is not open. You can reach the Afterhours Health Line by calling 503-879-2002 and follow the prompts. The Afterhours Health Line will coordinate care and communicate with Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center providers. ■

\$2.2 trillion CARES Act was passed by Congress in March 2020

CARES ACT continued from front page

that has been constantly shifting and changing."

Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes reaped about \$200 million in direct payments from the departments of the Treasury and Interior in CARES Act funding, including \$11 million to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, almost \$26 million to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and about \$39 million to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

The \$2.2 trillion CARES Act was passed by Congress in March and Oregon Tribes initially received a combined \$152.7 million in funding, according to a Harvard study that used Treasury's publicly announced formula for determining payments to Tribes. The study estimated that the Grand Ronde Tribe initially received approximately \$33 million in funding. The exact amount, according to the U.S. government website, was in the ballpark at \$31.6 million.

After a hold on 40 percent of the \$8 billion allocated for Tribes ended upon settlement of whether Alaska Native corporations were eligible to receive CARES Act funding, Treasury dispersed the balance to help Native American Tribes weather the COVID-19 storm.

In addition to making direct general welfare payments to Tribal members, the Grand Ronde Tribe has used the federal funding to start a technology grant to buy computers for Tribal member students who must attend school through distance learning, as well as for

Elders to keep them connected with the Tribe and their families.

Funds also have been used to help the Education Department conduct outreach to Tribal students over the summer by sending out boxes filled with educational activities and hire additional employees through the end of 2020.

The Tribe's Housing Department helped Tribal members with mortgage and rental assistance and funds have been used to pay Tribal employees who have worked on COVID-19-related activities or been affected by Tribal office closures caused by the virus.

Community Health hired two COVID-19 relief community health representatives using the funds and the Tribe purchased personal protective equipment for governmental and casino employees and guests.

Other CARES Act-funded projects have included improvements on the Rail Depot and partially funding a pilot child care program in Grand Ronde.

Most recently, the Tribe approved a contract using CARES Act funding to update the audio-visual equipment in Tribal Council Chambers that will allow virtual interaction with the membership.

The CARES Act funding did come with one very important stipulation - that it be spent by the end of 2020. Tribal Finance Officer Chris Leno declined to say how much unspent funds the Grand Ronde Tribe still has left.

However, many Tribes nationwide are hoping the new Congress will extend the spending deadline so that the unspent federal monies can be used to fund Tribal services into 2021. ■

Holiday surprise



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Nutrition Program Manager Kristy Criss-Lawson, left, and Activities Assistant Virginia Kimsey-Roof presented holiday food baskets during the weekly box lunch distribution held at the Elders Activity Center on Wednesday, Dec. 23. Along with the holiday baskets, which included a turkey coupon, Elders also received gifts.

53 employees honored for years of service

Tresa Mercier marks 36 years of working for the Tribe

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

Fifty-three Tribal employees, all hired in the last quarter of their respective year, were honored for a combined 721 years of service to the Grand Ronde Tribe at a virtual awards ceremony held Wednesday, Dec. 16.

In past years, the ceremony was held in conjunction with the Tribe's annual employee Christmas party held at Spirit Mountain Casino. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person event was canceled in favor of an online one.

Health & Wellness Center Business Office Manager Tresa Mercier continues to set the employment longevity record with the Tribe with 36 years of service.

One other Mercier – Public Works Coordinator John – was honored for reaching his 30th year of service to the Tribe.

Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. led the invocation dressed as Santa Claus and Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy thanked employees for all of their hard work during 2020.

"My hands are raised to you, the employees of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde," she said. "It's an honor and a privilege to welcome you to this celebration. Today, I see the list of employees and I am humbled by every one of you. You are able to adapt and change. When you reflect back on the hard times, it is when you become stronger. Today, we are here to honor and thank you. This is a year we will always remember."

Tribal General Manager David



Smoke Signals screenshot

Tribal General Manager David Fullerton announced raffle winners during the virtual Years of Service Awards held Wednesday, Dec. 16. Fifty-three Tribal employees were honored for a combined 721 years of service.

Fullerton said that 2020 had been a stressful year on multiple levels, but employees have helped keep things running smoothly.

"It's pretty amazing times thinking back to when this began to where we are today," Fullerton said. "We've been basically in deployment for a year now. Hands up to you, our staff and employees. We are really proud of you. Thank you for your service. How fortunate we are to have long-term employees, and that trend continues. To all of our staff, what an amazing job you have done. As with everyone else, we are looking forward to 2021."

Other Tribal Council members in attendance during the virtual event included Vice Chair Chris Mercier and Secretary Jon A. George.

A week before the online ceremony, Fullerton sent an all-employee

e-mail with event details.

"We all understand that this year has not been a 'normal, business as usual year' due to the pandemic. We have faced a year of learning how to work in a different way than we have in years past. COVID-19 is forcing us to alter the way we celebrate. Your safety, the safety of guests, the Tribal membership and our community is of the utmost importance to us as we consider how to celebrate the holiday season and recognize our employees."

In lieu of an onsite meal, each employee was given a \$20 voucher to use at any of Spirit Mountain Casino's restaurants or food venues. Additionally, every employee received a \$300 holiday bonus.

Achieving the quarter-century mark in employment were Social Services Department Manager Dana Ainam, Facilities Senior Administrative Assistant Daphney Colton, Employee Benefits Administrator Tammy Gould, Records Clerk Hollie Mercier, Compensation/HRIS Administrator Candy Scranton and Lands Department Manager Jan Reibach.

Ceded Lands Manager Michael Karnosh reached 24 years of service. Rounding out employees reaching or exceeding two decades with the Tribe were Dental Assistant Donnette Spaulding, Cultural Education Specialist Crystal Szczepanski, Tribal Court Judicial Assistant Julie Boekhoff and Records Clerk Egypt Leno with 23 years of service; Procurement Department Manager Nathan Rolston with 21 years; and Planning & Grants Development Manager Kim Rogers with 20 years.

Other employees recognized for their service of five years or more during the ceremony included: 19 years: Home Improvement Coordinator Donald Coon.

17 years: Librarian Kathy Cole. 15 years: Home Improvement Coordinator Loyal Hamilton, Gaming Commission Compliance Manager Rose Smith and Post Treatment Counselor Christopher Holliday.

14 years: Technology Technician Joe Loomis and Purchased/ Referred Care Specialist Tauni McCammon.

13 years: Housing Administrative Program Manager Joan Dugger and Community Health Events Coordinator Kandee Little.

12 years: Cultural Education Specialist Flicka Lucero and 6-12 Tutor Isaiah Sherwood.

10 years: Vocational Rehabilitation Trainee Rhonda Leno and Early Head Start Teacher Melissa Phillips.

9 years: Security Officer Daniel Hyatt, Pharmacy Technician Stephanie Wolfe, Senior Applications Administrator Jose Luna and Maintenance Technician Brent Buckner.

8 years: Maintenance Technician/Groundskeeper Nicholas Kimsey, Pharmacy Technician Cindy Brickell, Secretary/Medical Assistant Jamie Adams, K-5 Tutor/Advisor Lead Devin Boekhoff and Utility Maintenance Technician Richard Smith.

7 years: HVAC Technician Daron Pond Jr., Payroll Administrator Michelle Peterson, Groundskeeper Anthony Henry, Youth Education Tutor/Advisor Emily Rawls and Housing Groundskeeper Edward Denhem II.

6 years: Day Shift Housekeeper Shelly Fox, Medical Assistant Amanda Walker, K-5 Tutor/Advisor Santi Atanacio, Community Fund Administrative Assistant Marissa Leno and Chinuk Immersion Preschool Classroom Aide Shantell Ulestad-Salinas.

5 years: Dentist Ryan Davis, Classroom Aide Wendy Mercier, Housing Maintenance Technician Winston Mercier, Gaming Commission Licensing Specialist Brittany Mock, Lead Housekeeper Coley Parazoo, Executive Director of Health Services Kelly Rowe and Staff Accountant Gloria Schwalger.

Raffles also were conducted during the event and included cash prizes of \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500 and \$1,000. There were also drawings for a day's worth of administrative leave.

Employees recognized during the awards received an additional bonus check and those reaching the 10-year mark also received a Tribal Pendleton blanket or \$100.

After the Years of Service event concluded, employees were dismissed with pay for the remainder of the day.

Childcare Reimbursement Program

Applications accepted September 1, 2020



<u>Purpose:</u> Tribal Funding allocated to assist families with high costs of child care through a partial reimbursement program through the Social Services Department.

- This is a first come first serve program
- Full applications and supporting documents must be received to process application
- Approved applicants will receive the reimbursement September 1 through August 31 of the current year
- Each household will receive up to a \$100 monthly reimbursement per eligible child
- Social Services will maintain a waiting list based on date/time of application in the event that approved applicants become ineligible at any point during the current application year

Eligibility:

- The child receiving childcare must be a Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (CTGR) member and 12 years old or younger
- Child must attend a Certified Licensed Childcare Facility
- Parent (s) / Guardian must be currently employed at least 20 hours per week or more and /or attending school as a part-time student minimum
- Two parent/guardian household, both parents/guardians must be working or attending school
- ♦ Household must meet the income criteria of 185% of Federal Poverty Level

Documentation required:

- Completed Application
- Verification of child(s) residence or custody agreement (ie. 2019 Taxes, Rental Agreement, Snap report etc.).
- Copy of childcare facility license
- Release of Information for the childcare facility
- Copies of wage stubs for the past <u>30</u> days and current classroom schedule. For two parent/ guardian households, both parents must provide documentation

Contact Social Services at (503) 879-2034



Are you frustrated with your diabetes control?

Do you have questions about diabetes?

Do you need help managing your diabetes?

If so...

Call the Medical Clinic today at 503-879-2002

To schedule an individual diabetes education appointment

Taking a shot

Tribal member opens basketball-oriented store in Portland's Hawthorne District

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

PORTLAND – Grand Ronde Tribal member Troy Douglass has opened up a store dedicated to his love of basketball and the Portland Trail Blazers.

Ball Was Life is Douglass's second venture into the retail business. His first store, Cultural Blends, is located in the Lloyd Center Mall.

Douglass, 31, had long pondered opening a store dedicated to basketball nostalgia, but was waiting for the right opportunity. Oddly enough, the COVID-19 pandemic helped provide that.

"The mall was closed for three months and that was really tough. I really had to hustle to sell merchandise and thought how it would be better if I had a store located in an area with a lot of foot traffic," Douglass said.

The owners of a Native American tattoo shop down the street from the site Douglass had been eyeing contacted him with information that the current tenant was closing her retail business.

"I just showed up and was helping her move her stuff out and began asking questions about this spot," he said. "I talked to the building owner and he is a basketball fan and loved the idea, so it took off from there and I leased this space."

Douglass opened his store in early October to a line that stretched around the block.

"I was a bit surprised," he said. "It was really cool. All things considered, we are doing really well. People love basketball. When I first opened Cultural Blends, basketball always seeped in. This is a true passion of mine. What we have provided here is an escape from 2020 by proving nostalgia. We are a community spot where people who love basketball can come."

Much of the merchandise for Ball Was Life comes from Douglass's own childhood room, as well as online collectors, websites and thrift shops. The name itself is an ode to the past.

"Our mantra is, I may be past

If you go

Ball Was Life

Where: 3405 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. in Portland's Hawthorne District.

Hours: Noon to 6 p.m. Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday; and noon to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

More information: Call 971-279-5003 or follow Ball Was Life on Instagram @ballwaslifedotcom.

my prime, but I'll still give you buckets,'" Douglass said. "We offer anything and everything basketball: Dennis Rodman dolls, Damon Stoudamire jerseys and Portland Fire collectibles. The employees can even play basketball. We'll take on any storefront staff in the city. I'm not saying we'll win, but we're not afraid to play anybody."

The Portland Fire was a Women's National Basketball Association franchise that joined the league in 2000 as a counterpart to the Trail Blazers. The Fire only lasted two seasons, however.

Other items on sale at Ball Was Life include posters, collectible figures from myriad NBA teams, posters, Blazers jackets, shoes, hats, bobble heads, books and vintage drinking glasses. An NBA Jam arcade game sits in one corner.

Although opening a retail store in the midst of a global pandemic may seem like a Hail Mary to some, Douglass said the opportunity to be in the bustling Hawthorne District was too good to pass up. He notes the store is off to a good start thanks to what he calls Portland's love affair with basketball culture.

"Basketball and the Blazers are huge in Portland. The owner of this space is a big fan, so we went for it," Douglass said. "It's quirky so it fits in well with the neighborhood. People love it."

Evidence of that was shown on a recent Friday afternoon as



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal member Troy Douglass spins a basketball in his recently opened basketball-oriented shop on Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard in Portland.

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Douglass handled a sale using a basketball-shaped phone, customer purchases and an interview with *Smoke Signals* at the same time.

So far, the best-selling product has been the Blazer Barbie Doll.

"We sell a lot of Blazer gear in general," he said. "We have some pretty eclectic stuff."

Like he did with Cultural Blends, Douglass applied for and received a grant from the Native American Youth and Family Center in Portland to help secure a lease on the store. The Oregon Native American Chamber also assisted in his business venture.

"Without them I would be in a world of hurt," he said. "I'm so grateful for their support."

He encourages other millennial Tribal members who may be looking to start to business to trust their instincts and do their research.

"It's also OK to try and be wrong,"

Douglass said. "I've been wrong about a lot of things. Sometimes you don't know for sure, but you have to go for it."

He added that doing market research is essential.

"Figure out why a business would do well," Douglass said. "We have a focus – basketball. If you like basketball, you would like this place. That's our market. Find the 'why' for your business."

Douglass founded the Cultural Blends brand in 2011 while a student at the University of Hawaii. After graduating, he moved back to Oregon. He opened his first storefront in Lloyd Center in November 2018, and hopes to continue growing a reputation for not just providing warm, top-of-the-line customer service, but also a unique experience for customers.

"That's where I see retail going in the next five to 10 years," Douglass said. "It's those that know how to create that amazing experience. For us little guys, that's everything. You get to share a little piece of your heart and soul with your customers."



Tribal member Troy Douglass is framed by candles depicting current and former Portland Trail Blazers' players inside his new store, Ball Was Life.

Tribal member Troy Douglass has recently opened a basketball-oriented shop on Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard in Portland. It is the second store Douglass has opened in Portland. The first, Cultural Blends, opened in the Lloyd Center in 2019.



First COVID-19 vaccine doses arrived in Oregon in December

VACCINE continued from front page

reaching out to first responders."

The Tribe is coordinating with the Oregon Health Authority for vaccination delivery. Those who receive first doses need to have the follow-up dose 28 days later.

Rowe advised anyone with questions about vaccination to visit the Tribe's COVID-19 web page at www.grandronde.org or the Tribe's Facebook Page.

"Please do not call the clinic because it ties up the line for people who are trying to get in for COVID testing," she said. "We will announce updates as prolifically as possible. We have gotten the vaccine, and we will continue to get it."

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla's Yellowhawk Health Center was among the first medical facilities in Oregon to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

The Umatilla Tribe has had approximately 8 percent of its COVID-19 tests come back positive since the pandemic hit. The



Photo courtesy of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe was one of the first Tribal employees to receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccination on Wednesday, Dec. 23. The Tribe has received its first 200 doses that will be administered initially to frontline health workers, first responders and the most vulnerable population, such as Elders, at the Tribe.

state average is approximately 5.8 percent.

The Umatilla Reservation also is surrounded by Oregon's Umatilla and Union counties, which have had some of the worst virus outbreaks in the state, according to a recent Oregon Public Broadcasting article.

In order to store the vaccine, which requires ultra-low temperatures, the Umatilla Tribe procured a freezer that was previously used to keep lamprey specimens for study. The Moderna vaccine can be stored at regular refrigeration temperatures.

Grand Ronde's Health & Wellness Center coronavirus cases are below the state average, with approximately 3.2 percent of tests coming back positive.

The first COVID-19 vaccine doses arrived in Oregon on Monday, Dec. 14, and Legacy Health was the first registered vaccine provider in the state to receive them. Sites in Portland and Tualatin each took delivery of one package of 975 doses, according to a press release from the Oregon Health Authority.

Additional doses were expected at three other locations in Oregon on Tuesday, Dec. 15: Oregon Health & Science University Pharmacy, a Kaiser Permanente site in Portland and St. Alphonsus Medical Center in Ontario.

The remaining 30,225 vaccine doses from Oregon's first-week allocation arrived at hospitals throughout the rest of the week, with 10,725 of the doses going to nursing facilities. Approximately 10,407 people were vaccinated during the first week, according to the Health Authority.

The federal Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention asked Oregon to choose the sites as a way to test the ordering system.

The long-anticipated vaccine shipments followed a U.S. Food and Drug Administration decision on Friday, Dec. 11, to issue an emergency use authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. It was found in clinical trials to have a 95 percent effective rate, and only cause mild to moderate short-term side effects.

"In recent weeks, as COVID-19 vaccines reached the final stages of approval, I have said time and again that hope is on the way," Gov. Kate Brown said. "Today, I can tell you that help is here."

Vaccinations will be prioritized, starting with frontline health care workers and long-term care facility residents who are among the most vulnerable.

"Throughout the process, we will work to ensure that the Oregonians that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including those from Black, Indigenous, Latino/Latina/Latinx, Pacific Islander and Tribal communities, have equitable access to vaccination," Brown said.

Oregon Health Authority Director Patrick Allen said that vaccinations against COVID-19 are still months away for most Oregonians, so prevention measures such as wearing masks, physical distancing, avoiding gatherings and staying home if sick must continue.

The vaccine manufactured by Moderna Inc. received FDA emergency use authorization on Friday, Dec. 18. The Moderna vaccine has been found to be approximately 94 percent effective with minimal side effects.

Public health officials estimate there will be enough of the two vaccines to provide first doses to about 100,000 people, with second doses administered in January. People will need to follow public health protocols between the two doses and up to several weeks following the second dose as their bodies build up resistance to the virus.

Essential workers, followed by people with underlying health conditions and those older than 65 are next in line as they are identified by the Oregon Health Authority's Vaccine Advisory Committee.

Priority groups in Phase 2 will be determined at a later date, and the general population isn't expected to be eligible for vaccination until spring.

Tribal Council OKs contract to design language building

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

In its final meeting of 2020, Tribal Council approved a design contract for the new language building during its Dec. 30 meeting.

MCA Architects of Portland was the highest scoring applicant out of six proposals and the firm will provide architectural and engineering design services for the new building.

The language education building will feature six classrooms. Four classrooms are planned for construction in 2021 and two older grade classrooms are planned for future construction.

Currently, the Tribe has enough funds to pay for the two planned blended K-4 classrooms through a \$500,000 federal grant and has raised more than 50 percent of the funds needed for two preschool classrooms and has arranged funding for most of the balance.

However, there are not sufficient funds to pay for the design of the two older grade classrooms at this time, but the Tribe may be the funder of last resort if grant applications currently submitted prove unsuccessful.

Because the MCA Architects contract was for more than \$100,000, it required Tribal Council approval.

In other action, Tribal Council: Approved a funding agreement not to exceed \$132,711 with the Bonneville Power Administration to fund the work of Hydrosystem Compliance Specialist Lawrence Schwabe. The Tribe has been receiving the funding since 2010, Schwabe said during the Tuesday, Dec. 22, Legislative Action Committee meeting;

- Appointed Clackamas County Commissioner Martha Schrader to a two-year term on the Spirit Mountain Community Fund Board of Trustees. She will take the place of Oregon Commissioner of Labor Val Hoyle;
- Approved final adoption of amendments to the Housing Ordinance that will allow the Housing Department to re-assign a lease after a tenant defaults and comply with requirements of the federally insured Housing and Urban Development mortgage program. The amendments were originally adopted on an emergency basis in early September and the Tribe received no comments for the membership regarding the changes;
- Approved applying to the Oregon Department of Education's Student Success Tribal Language grant program for \$150,000 that would fund, if received, language assessments and developing Tribal language teachers;
- And approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe because he or she meets the requirements outlined in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

Tribal Council also approved the agenda for the 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 3, General Council meeting that will be held via the Zoom teleconferencing application. The Education Department will give a report.

To watch the entire meeting, visit the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and click on the Government icon and then Videos. ■



NEW SIGN AT THE HWC

THE DESIGNATED AREA IN FRONT OF THE CLINIC IS FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING ONLY.



'Some customers are ecstatic'

WILDWOOD continued from front page

says. "People have asked me why I would buy a restaurant during a pandemic, but we've been successful because it's in a small town and the community is very supportive. Ninety percent of those who have come in here, I know by first name. We are successful because of the base of people who surround us."

Due to Oregon's COVID-19 restrictions on indoor dining, the restaurant is open for takeout only from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

Since opening a few weeks ago, Haller has added new menu items, such as pretzel buns and a peanut butter burger.

And the hottest seller? Deep-fried pickles, the brainchild of one of the cooks.

"I had my doubts, but after being open for two weeks, we sold 1,000 deep-fried pickles," Haller says. "We got so busy we had to double up on kitchen staff. A couple from Mc-Minnville drove out here because they heard about the pickles."

Haller and his wife are no strangers to the hospitality industry. He worked at Spirit Mountain Casino in food and beverage service for 12 years. She was a manager of Doryland Pizza in Pacific City. They both worked at Fort Hill Restaurant near Grand Ronde as well.

"We are having fun doing different specials daily," Haller says. "On Taco Tuesday, we sold 140 tacos in two hours. We will have many more new items coming out that will be on our dine-in menu when we are able to offer that again."

Haller says that the purchase of the hotel and restaurant would not



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal member Matt Haller sits in a booth in the Wildwood Hotel and Restaurant in Willamina on Tuesday, Dec. 15. Haller and his wife, April, purchased the hotel and restaurant in October. The restaurant is currently takeout only, but the hotel's six rooms are available.

have been possible without the help of the Kendall sisters.

"They were very generous and when we talked about us purchasing this place, I told them if they gave us the opportunity, I would put my house up for it. They did, and my house sold in two days."

Most of the Willamina locals seem happy the restaurant is open again, giving them a different dining option.

"Some customers are ecstatic," Haller says. "We experience a different relationship than you would in a larger city because we already know them and if not, have served them at a different restaurant."

As if to emphasize that point, during an interview with *Smoke Signals* before the Wildwood opened for lunch, Haller's grandfather, Tribal Elder and former Tribal Council member Bob Haller, stopped by for a cup of coffee.

When the COVID-19 pandemic is over, Haller says he is looking forward to extending the menu, hours and bringing back the Wildwood's tradition of hosting live music.

"I can't wait to bring that experience back here," he says.

In the meantime, he and April are continuing to make improvements to the building's interior and experiment with new menu items.

Although the pandemic has affected indoor dining, all six hotel rooms adjacent to the restaurant are fully open for rental, with COVID-19 restrictions in place. They start at approximately \$65 a night.

The hotel was built near the end of the 19th century as the Commercial Hotel when the frontier logging town was in its early stages. It served as host to many men who traveled to work in the logging industry or in the town's brick plant. Business men and then eventually some women moved in, creating an informal brothel, according to the hotel's website.

Although it was originally a three-and-a-half story building, the hotel was reduced to two stories after a fire in the 1930s. It is rumored to be haunted and was once rented by the popular show "Ghost Hunters."

"We stayed in there for 20 days when we were remodeling things and never saw any ghosts though," Haller says.

He and April live in Sheridan with their two children, Cheyenne and Robert. His parents are Tribal member Rex Haller and Martha Hood, and grandparents are Tribal Elders Robert Haller and LeVeta Sell.

The Wildwood Hotel is located at 150 N.E. Main St., Willamina. Hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily for takeout only. Call 503-876-7100 to place an order or book a hotel room or follow the business on Facebook. ■

Longtime casino employee honored with safety award

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

Joann Mercier, a 32-year employee of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Spirit Mountain Casino, was recently honored by the Tribal Police Department for her contributions to safety.

Mercier, 70, who worked for more than 13 years as casino security director, retired at the end of November.

She received the Tribal Police Public Safety Award because of her contribution to public safety in Grand Ronde, Police Chief Jake McKnight said.

"During the start-up of the Grand Ronde Police Department 10 years



Joann Mercier

ago, Joann had a great working relationship with the Polk County sheriff," he said. "This was very important because it made it easier for us to gain their trust during the transition of us patrolling our Tribal lands. She also was the umbrella of safety at the casino for millions of customers. I was honored to work alongside of her for the last 10 years."

McKnight said that Mercier's calming demeanor helped her successfully deal with stressful situations.

"She was able to keep all parties calm during these tough times and made us talk through our issues," he said. "Joann has always had this calming effect on people for as long as I have known her. This is why I believed she deserved the first Public Safety Award from the Tribal Police Department." ■





Santa, aka Tribal member Aaron Anderson, waves to people watching the Holiday Parade as it passed through Tribal housing on Friday, Dec. 18. The event was organized by Khanamakwst Committee.

Everybody loves a Christmas parade



Participants wave from their decorated cars while participating in the Holiday Parade.



Heavy rain did not stop participants from waving from their cars while participating in the Holiday Parade as it passed through Tribal housing on Friday, Dec. 18. The event was organized by Khanamakwst Committee.



Decorated cars pass through Tribal Housing.

Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez



Darth Vader and Yoda did not let the heavy rain prevent them from participating in the Holiday Parade.



Pictures with Santa



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Anwyl Norwest, 5, receives a package from Veronica Gaston dressed as a Minion as his father, Brett, looks on after having his picture taken with Santa, aka Tribal member Aaron Anderson, near the Grand Ronde apartments on Thursday, Dec. 17. Santa sat in the sleigh to allow for appropriately socially distanced photos during the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was organized by Khanamakwst Committee.



Hannah Nice and her son, Benson Knight, 3, have their picture taken with Santa, aka Tribal member Aaron Anderson, and a reindeer, aka Spirit Mountain Casino laundry attendant Matthew Sweet.





Availability of ODOT STIF Transit Grant Funds

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is providing notice that the Tribe is reviewing options for their application (or STIF Plan) for ODOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Funds (STIF), which is due Feb. 1, 2021. The Tribe is eligible for \$100,000 a year from this fund for use with public transit. On Tuesday, Jan. 12, the Tribe's STIF Advisory Committee will meet to review options and make its recommendation to Tribal Council. The meeting will be by telephone between noon and 1 p.m. The public is invited to attend by calling in.

Last year Tribal staff and the Advisory Committee recommended creating a new public transit route between Grand Ronde and the city of Dallas and creating local collector/circulator service within the immediate Grand Ronde area. That was approved by Tribal Council and submitted. The Tribe anticipates continuing with that plan this year as well but is accepting other suggestions for options.

It is expected that the Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will vote on adopting the Tribe's STIF Plan on the uses of these funds at its meeting on Jan. 27, 2021, at the Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

Contact Kim Rogers at 503-879-2250, kim.rogers@grandronde. org for more information including the call-in number and participant code. Meeting materials will be available for public review by Jan. 7 and can be e-mailed. ■

mak mak Mania still cooking virtually

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

Like pretty much everything else in 2020, a popular Tribal food and culture event moved to an online format this year.

mək mək Mania, which highlights and celebrates food services and resources in the Grand Ronde and West Valley communities, was held via the video conferencing app Zoom on Thursday, Dec. 17.

mək mək Mania is typically held in early fall, but was rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is co-sponsored by the Grand Ronde Food Bank (iskam məkhmək haws) and Marion-Polk Food Share.

The virtual event featured different speakers, recipes and presentations by Marion-Polk Food Share, the Oregon State University Extension Service, Food Hero, Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers and 4-H programs, as well as Tribal Youth Empowerment & Prevention and the Natural Resources Department Native Plant Propagation program.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier hosted the event, which has been held four times in the Tribal gym and averaged 80 to 100 people in attendance. Food-related vendors and service providers set up informational tables, conduct cooking demonstrations and provide food to attendees.

"We've been hosting events like these and having community conversations regularly," Mercier said. "This normally is held at our gym, and our goal is to raise awareness of food issues and food access. What I have learned is I didn't know the depth of the resources that are available. Some of the people who have come to us, I had no idea of what they did or the services they offered."

One of the pre-recorded videos featured Youth Prevention Coordinator and Youth Council Adviser



Smoke Signals screenshot

Youth Prevention Coordinator
Shannon Stanton gives a
demonstration on how to make her
Three Sisters Stew during the virtual
mək mək Mania held on Thursday,
Dec. 17. The event was hosted
by Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris
Mercier.

Shannon Stanton and Native Connections Coordinator Amber Mercier discussing a new Tribal Youth Empowerment and Prevention program, "Cooking with Shannon." They also hosted a cooking demonstration of Three Sisters Stew.

At the conclusion of the online event, Mercier thanked participants and attendees.

"I know it's not the same as having it in the gym and with all of the tables, but this was our attempt to make up for it," he said.

Several food- and cooking-related raffle prize drawings were given away during the event. To view the video of the event in its entirety, visit youtube/q6KueqaSU4A.

POLK GOUNTY WIG

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> Nutricion para usted y su familia La Clinica de WIC a llegado a Grand Ronde Para mas informacion favor de llamar al 503-623-8175 Ext 2297

'2021 Resolutions'

Goodbye 2020. Hello 2021. The 2021 Royalty participants for the CTGR and Veterans SEB groups share their goals for the coming year. Whatever you choose, remember "there's really no limit to what you can do!"

The collections also can be found at www.facebook.com/CTGRRoyalty and www.facebook.com/CTGRVeteransSEB.





















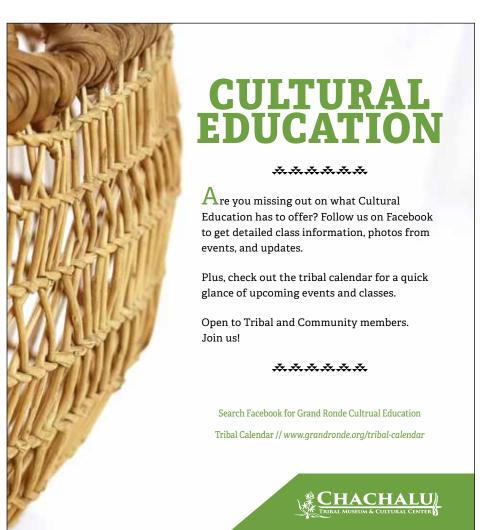


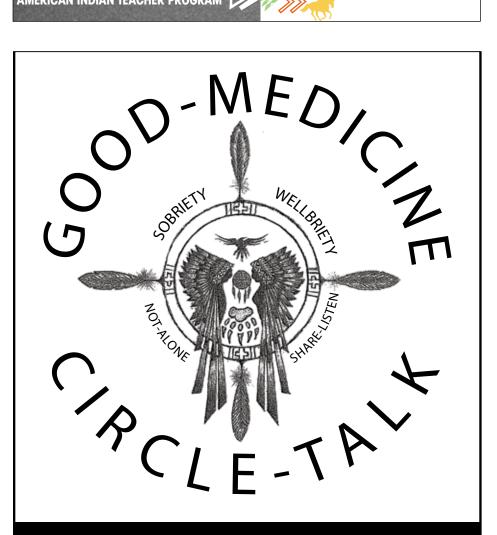












Every Saturday 4 p.m. • Everyone welcome
This is a Sober Event • Encouraging Sobriety
Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon
Toward Spirit Mountain
At the Big Cross - Lighthouse Church • A-Ho503-879-3435

Helping hands honored



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Spirit Mountain Community Fund Program Coordinator Angela Sears presents the 2020 Helping Hand Management Staff Award to Willamette Valley Hospice Clinical Manager Barb Farmer on Tuesday, Dec. 22, because of her expertise in pediatric hospice care throughout the years. With 30 years of experience, Farmer is also known as a hospice expert. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she immediately implemented safety measures to protect patients, families and staff. She also assists with testing staff members for COVID-19 so that they can safely provide care at facilities.



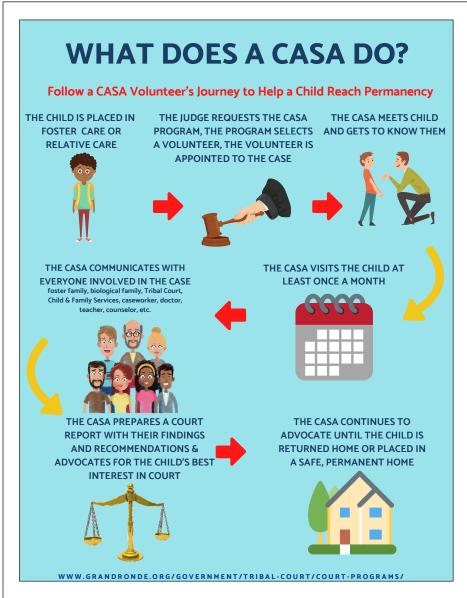
American Legion Post 10 Albany, Ore., Commander David Solomon holds the 2020 Helping Hand Volunteer Award on Monday, Dec. 14, given annually by Spirit Mountain Community Fund. Solomon, an unpaid volunteer, works numerous hours in the daily operation of American Legion Post 10. He is a retired New York City Fire Department emergency medical services employee who was one of the first responders to the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001. In spite of his injuries and health issues stemming from working "the pile," he continues to give of himself.

Environmental Assessment available

Tribal home ownership is nearing construction phase. As part of the environmental review process, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is complete. An Environmental Assessment (EA) was drafted and submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA has reviewed the EA, and has concurred with the Tribe's finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in relation to environmental impacts. The FONSI document is available for review by community members for 15 days from the time of this notice. If you are interested in reviewing the FONSI, please contact Torey Wakeland, Environmental Policy Analyst, at torey.wakeland@grandronde.org.



CASA of Linn County Volunteer Coordinator Robin Gardner displays the Spirit Mountain Community Fund 2020 Helping Hand Non-Management Staff Award on Tuesday, Dec. 22. Gardner promised her family that she would retire by 2020. Once 2020 came, the executive director at the time resigned and COVID-19 shut the office down. Therefore, Gardner displayed dedication and commitment to her volunteers and the children they serve by staying on with CASA until the end of 2020 to train new staff who have come onboard.



Steps to becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA):

- · Chat with Tribal Court staff about CASA volunteer work
- Complete the application and authorize a criminal background check
- Submit authorization for child welfare history check
- Come in for formal interview
- Complete 40 hours of initial or pre-service training and court observation

You must complete all steps above before being sworn in as an active CASA volunteer. You may be screened out at any point prior to swearing in. The preservice training will familiarize you with the needs of children who have been abused or neglected, the CASA's role and the Tribal Court and Child Welfare Systems.

To begin the process of becoming a CASA, please contact us by email courtprograms@grandronde.org or phone (503) 879-2303.

Grand Ronde Editorial Board position openings

The Grand Ronde Editorial Board, a Tribal board assigned the duty by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde ("Grand Ronde") of overseeing its independent Tribal press (*Smoke Signals*), invites applications to serve on the Grand Ronde Editorial Board. There will be one (1) open board positions occurring in March 2021.

The five-member Grand Ronde Editorial Board is responsible to the Grand Ronde Tribal Council. It oversees the editor of *Smoke Signals* to ensure the independent Tribal press reports news free from any undue influence and free from any political interest, and that Tribal news employees adhere to the highest ethical journalistic standards.

The Editorial Board meets monthly. From time to time, additional special meetings may be held. Board members are expected to attend all meetings in person, although participation by telephone or video will be permitted. Each board member receives a monthly stipend for attending meetings. Travel reimbursement is limited to travel within the six counties of Polk, Yamhill, Marion, Tillamook, Multnomah and Washington.

Board members must be 18 years of age, have qualified experience in management and/or publications, be of good character and integrity, and certify that he or she will adhere to the standards of accepted ethics of journalism as defined by the Society of Professional Journalists and endorsed by the Native American Journalists Association. Experience with and knowledge of Native American organizations is also preferred, as well as dedication to protecting and advancing a free press for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Applicants will be interviewed by the Grand Ronde Editorial Board before a recommendation is forwarded to Tribal Council. Terms run for three years.

Preference will be given to qualified Tribal members.

Submission deadline: 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29, 2021

Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest describing their qualifications, a résumé and three references to:

Grand Ronde Editorial Board c/o Smoke Signals Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde 9615 Grand Ronde Road Grand Ronde, OR 97347 Phone: 503.879.1463

E-mail: editorial.board@grandronde.org

Tribal teen attains Eagle Scout rank

Grand Ronde Tribal member Elisabeth Becker, 14, completed her Eagle Scout project to build a bridge for Columbia County Christian School in Warren, Ore.

She completed her Eagle board of review to earn the rank of Eagle Scout.

Becker will be part of the inaugural class of the first female Eagle Scouts along with her sister Evelyn from Troop 5294. Elisabeth, Evelyn and their brother Aiden all achieved Eagle Scout ranks amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and within three months of each other.

Appropriately, the crossing she built for her school was named "Becker's Bridge." ■



Elisabeth Becker



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Produced by IHS Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention, www.diabetes.ihs.gov

the Tribal Veterans Service Officer (TVSO)

Happy New Year!

Wishing you and your family a happy, safe, and fulfilling new year.

Welcome 2021!

We received 45 responses to the survey we sent in August!

hayu masi for taking the time to provide feedback.

(We are using the input we received to guide our activities in 2021).

Some of the suggestions we received →

-

Awareness of Benefits:

YES/NO Questions:

Q1: Are you aware of the services you may be entitled to as a veteran?

Q2: Are you interested in learning more about any of these programs?

Q3: Are you already receiving Veterans Benefits?

Q6: Would you use social media to obtain information about events & activities?

AVES

YES

(32)

(32)

(32)

(33)

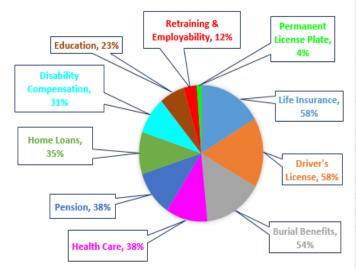
Other Program / Service Suggestions:

Virtual classes
Health care for spouses
Assistance with prescriptions
Travel to other Native events
More info on CTGR services / events
Leadership Mentor Group for Youth / Seminars
Rental Assistance / Housing / Home Improvement

Programs Veterans Want







CTGRTribalVSO@grandronde.org

Office Phone: (503) 879-1484

Mail: Social Services ~ Attn: TVSO

Mail: Social Services ~ Attn: TV 9615 Grand Ronde Rd. Grand Ronde Oregon, 97347





Sign UP To Win!

Want to win a new Smoke Signals hoodie or T-shirt?

Want to be one of the first Tribal members to receive smok signalz?

Want to receive the Tribal publication on your computer instead of waiting for it to arrive in the mail?

Well, here's your opportunity to do all that and potentially win a prize.

In an effort to be more efficient and reduce printing and postage costs, smok signəlz electronic subscribers receive a PDF (portable document format) version sent to them instead of a newsprint version sent via mail. All you need on your computer is Adobe Acrobat or another program that can read a PDF and you're set.

Why would you want to do that? The PDF version is available before the newspaper is sent to our Salem printing contractor. You can read the newspaper on your computer, print out a copy or just individual pages. Also, you will receive virus-free Tribal news much faster than the current standard mailing utilized by the Tribe.

In addition, smok signəlz will hold a drawing at the end of December. All e-subscribers will have their name included in the drawing and 11 will win either a hoodie or one of 10 T-shirts.

To receive an e-mailed PDF version of smok signəlz and stop receiving a mailed newsprint version, send your e-mail to esubscription@grandronde.org. Stopping mailed delivery of the newspaper will not affect other Tribal mail.

SmokeSignals.org

Walking On...

Vincent Asa Day

Feb. 20, 1973 - Dec. 20, 2020

Tribal member Vincent A. Day passed away on Sunday, Dec. 20, 2020. He was born on Feb. 20, 1973, in Sunnyside, Wash., to Joseph Alexander and Betty (Julian) Day.

Vincent is survived by his mother, Betty Madrigal; partner, Nicole George; children, Xavier Day, Vincent Day Jr. and Tucelia Day; siblings, Daniel Day, Clair Garza, Joseph Day, Sharon Williams and Sarah Day; and numerous family members.

Vincent was preceded in death by his grandparents; father, Joseph Alexander Day; and nephew, Jacob Day.

A private graveside service will be held at Terrace Heights Memorial Park in Yakima, Wash.



Other passings

Jerry Castro Manangan

Jan. 27, 1959 – Dec. 9, 2020

Tribal Elder Jerry Castro Manangan walked on Dec. 9, 2020. Crown Memorial in Portland is assisting the family.

There was a private immediate-family only service at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 29, at the Grand Ronde Tribal Cemetery.

Jonathan Aaron David Suderman

Sept. 29, 1998 - Nov. 29, 2020

Tribal member Jonathan Aaron David Suderman walked on Nov. 29, 2020. Edwards Funeral Home in University Place, Wash., is assisting the family.

At press time, no funeral service had been planned.

Rodney Lyle Thomas

June 11, 1949 - Dec. 18, 2020

Tribal Elder Rodney Lyle Thomas walked on Dec. 18, 2020. Wiefels Cremation and Funeral Services in Palm Springs, Calif., is assisting the family.

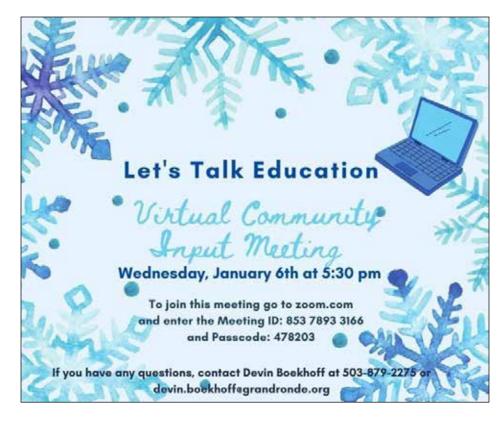
At press time, no funeral service had been planned.

Fee assistance

Enrolled Tribal members can request assistance with test fees (i.e. GRE, SAT, LSAT, ACT) and admissions application fees.

Contact Higher Education for more information at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2275. ■







12.16.20

Good News Ahead

But Challenges Remain

There is good news about Covid-19 vaccines, but we need to be vigilant for a while longer.

You have probably seen or heard the good news about the results of the Covid-19 vaccine trials. Two vaccines have reported almost 95% effectiveness in preventing infection with Covid-19. And more vaccines are on the way.

Having been approved by the Food and Drug Administration, the first of these vaccines is already being distributed and Tribes are starting to receive their shipments. Health care workers and people in long term care facilities are expected to receive the first doses. In the next 6 to 9 months, the rest of the US population should be able to be vaccinated.

Covid-19 continues to surge.

With this great news about the vaccine, it is tempting to let our guard down about Covid-19. But, we must stay resolved and continue to take steps to prevent its spread. The virus is surging all across the US. Hospitals are becoming over-crowded. Tribal communities, where medical care and resources can be limited, are some of the hardest hit.

Even being vaccinated does not mean we can stop being cautious. First, it takes several weeks for the vaccine to be effective. Second, while it is known that the vaccines either prevent or reduce the impact of being infected with Covid-19 disease, it is not yet known if they prevent asymptomatic infection which could be transmitted to others. Until the majority of the population is vaccinated, it is essential to wear a mask around people you don't live with.

Our collective commitment to fighting Covid-19 is more

important now than ever before.

Want to learn more?

Visit us at:

Npaihb.org/covid-19/

Or Contact:

Sheila Hosner, MsIH, DTMPH

Covid-19 Corps Communication Specialist,

shosner@cdcfoundation.org

Remaining Vigilant

The next 6-8 months are critical.

There is light at the end of the tunnel, but even with vaccines coming, remaining vigilant while we wait for them to be widely distributed is essential. This will help protect thousands of people. Together, we can protect our Tribes, communities, and families.

In the last few weeks, the most frequently reported places of exposure to Covid-19 are households, community or social activities, and workplaces. It is difficult to think that people you work and interact with might be infectious, but treating everyone you encounter outside your household as if they could have Covid-19, is the safest thing to do.

Everyday actions

Below are the four most important actions you can continue to take to stay safe. Together they provide a layered approach to limiting risk to yourself and others, each action building on the next to add more protection.

- Wear masks. Non-ventilated, multi-layer cloth masks not only help prevent you from exhaling infectious particles but from inhaling them, too. Wear masks whenever you are around people you don't live with, inside or outside.
- Stay at least six feet apart. When we breathe, talk, cough, or sing we exhale microscopic droplets. Larger droplets fall out of the air at about six feet, but smaller droplets, sometimes called aerosols, can travel past six feet and remain in the air for several hours.
- 3. Avoid large, indoor gatherings. These types of gatherings are a prime place to spread Covid-19. Inside it is difficult to stay six feet apart, poor indoor air circulation can cause a concentration of aerosol particles, and surfaces have more opportunity to become contaminated due to the number of people.

 Wash your hands. New studies have shown that the coronavirus can remain infectious on human skin for up to nine hours. Washing your hands frequently can help prevent spread.

Plan ahead.

As you go about your day or life, <u>plan ahead to be safe</u>. Have extra face coverings and hand sanitizer in your backpack, glove box, or purse; discuss safe gatherings with family and friends before events; and take a moment before gatherings to consider location. time. and distance.

- Location. Is the activity indoors or outdoors?
 Outdoor is better than indoor. Covid-19 stays in
 the air longer when indoors and can be spread
 by ventilation systems. Crowded indoor locations
 are especially high-risk.
- Time. How long will you be doing the activity? Shorter activities are safer. Being in "close contact," or within six feet of an infected individual for 15 minutes over 24 hours, increases your risk of becoming infected.
- Distance. Can you stay at least six feet apart from others? <u>Most</u> germs cannot travel more than six feet from person-to-person in the air.

Thinking and planning for location, time, and distance in your activities will help you and others stay safe, but it does not replace wearing a mask or staying home altogether!





What do you know about addiction?

Addiction is a term that is used a lot. Yet, most people do not understand what addiction is. Addiction is a general term for severe substance use disorders. Addiction is not caused by weakness! Addiction is not a choice! Addiction is not easy to overcome! A baby can be born with an addiction gene even if both parents never used a single substance!

Our DNA is composed of genes. Genes decide what color your eyes are. Genes control all of the traits that you have. Traits include what we look like physically. Traits also include how your body functions. There are more than 20,000 genes in your DNA. When genes get changed, diseases can occur.

Let's look at an example. Some people are more likely to experience Type II diabetes. There are many genes associated with diabetes. Genes sometimes have mistakes and changes happen. Once the mistake happens, all future copies of the gene will be changed. A gene could have changed in a grandparent. At conception, the gene can be passed on. It's not just that you have the gene. Your childhood environment and adult lifestyle matters a lot!

Addiction is the same! Some people are more likely to experience addiction than others. Just like in diabetes, there are many genes associated with addiction. Just like in diabetes, you could have received a changed gene from one of your grandparents. Depending upon the environment and lifestyle, the changed gene may lead to the disease of addiction.

Addiction occurs when a person cannot stop using a substance like alcohol or drugs. Even when there are really bad outcomes, the person cannot stop using the substance. It is called chronic, which means it is very long lasting. Tolerance is developed. This means over time it takes more and more of the substance to get the same effect. The most important thing to understand about addiction is that it changes your brain and how your brain functions! The physical changes to the brain can even be seen with a brain scan.

Just because a person has addiction genes, it does not mean you will develop an addiction. The best protection against addiction is to never take substances like alcohol or drugs! If you have used alcohol or drugs and have experienced negative consequences, the best way to prevent addiction is to get treatment.

If you have questions about addiction or would like more information about treatment, please call Elaine Robertson at the ye?lan tilixam haws, 503-879-1389.





The interestion is provided to you by the Indigenous Project LAUADH Claritary Actions for United Needs in Dalahoris Health). The



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