



2026 Spring Break  
Camp photos  
— pg. 12

APRIL 1, 2026



# SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE · SMOKE SIGNALS.ORG

## Tribal Council approves first reading of ordinance amendments

By Danielle Harrison  
*Smoke Signals editor*

**T**ribal Council approved a first reading of amendments to three ordinances that, if approved, will change the Tribal government organizational structure.

The first reading was done at the Wednesday, March 11, Tribal Council meeting.

Proposed changes will be to the fiscal, personnel and executive management ordinances and include the following:

- The finance officer, audit services director and general manager will report directly to the chief of staff instead of Tribal Council;
- The chief of staff will be responsible for hiring, promoting, supervising, disciplining and discharging employees;
- The chief of staff or their delegate will develop and implement personnel policies and procedures which “govern all aspects of employment with the Tribe;”
- The chief of staff will be responsible for carrying out executive functions of the council as well as legislative actions, which include administering, planning and directing Tribal programs and services “in accordance with Tribal Council directives,” and implementing processes and principles of the Tribe’s strategic plan.

“Basically, it’s an organizational

See **CHANGES**  
continued on page 5



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

**LatinoBuilt Program Director Jose Balcazar, left, shakes hands with Spirit Mountain Community Fund Grants Coordinator Jesse Knight during the fund’s first quarter check presentation in the Governance Center Atrium Wednesday, March 11. LatinoBuilt is a nonprofit trade association serving Latino business owners and entrepreneurs in construction. The organization received a \$50,000 grant.**

## Community Fund presents first quarter grant awards

By Nicole Montesano  
*Smoke Signals staff writer*

**T**he total number of grants was down for the Spirit Mountain Community Fund first quarter check presentations, but the projects those grants funded were vital to their constituents.

With decreases in available funding nationally in the last year, need has grown.

“We were only able to fund approximately 10% of the applications we received, which means we left a lot of amazing work on the table,” Community Fund Executive Director Angie Sears told the assembled representatives during the first quarter check pre-

See **FUND**  
continued on page 9

## Longtime language teacher, librarian retires



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

By Danielle Harrison  
*Smoke Signals editor*

**W**hen asked what her favorite memory is after working 22 years for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Kathy Cole doesn’t hesitate.

“Just the relationships that I’ve built with everyone throughout the years,” she said. “Some of the kids I taught in preschool, kindergarten and

high school...just watching them grow up and come back to the Tribe...to continue to have that relationship with them. It’s been really rewarding and fulfilling. Even the kids that don’t come back to the Tribe, just watching them going out in the world and making a name for themselves

See **RETIREMENT**  
continued on page 7

**Tribal Elder Kathy Cole hugs Tribal member Willow Squetimkin, 9, during a lunch in the Tribal gym Wednesday, March 18. Cole retired as the Tribal librarian in February and Shawash-ili?i Skul held the lunch to honor her retirement. Cole worked for the Tribe for 22 years in various positions, many of those years as a Chinuk Wawa language teacher.**

# General Council meeting

11 a.m. Sunday, April 12

Lane Community College Longhouse  
4000 E. 30th Ave., Eugene.

Tribal members can participate in person and remotely via Zoom.  
Call 800-422-0232 for more information.

## NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday meetings

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, April 8.....	4 p.m.
Wednesday, April 22.....	4 p.m.

Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed.  
Attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 503-879-2304.

### FISCAL MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT ORDINANCES OPEN FOR COMMENT

Tribal Council is considering amendments to the Fiscal Management, Personnel Management and Executive Management ordinances. The proposed amendments were given a first reading at the March 11, 2026, Tribal Council meeting.

The proposed amendments to each ordinance reflect modifications to the organizational reporting structure and certain position responsibilities, other administrative updates and may include minor technical (i.e., formatting and typographical) modifications.

Tribal Council invites comment on the proposed amendments to the Fiscal Management, Personnel Management and Executive Management ordinances. For copies of the proposed amendments, please contact the Tribal Attorney's Office at 503-879-4664 or legal@grandronde.org. Send comments to the Tribal Attorney's Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347 or by email to legal@grandronde.org.

Comments must be received by Friday, May 1, 2026. ■

# Letters welcome

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 without permission.

Our editorial policy is intended to encourage input from Tribal members and readers about stories printed in the Tribal newspaper and current events happening within the Tribe. However, all letters received must be signed by the author, an address must be given and a phone number or email 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 any individual, as well as individual Tribal staff members, individual Tribal administration members or individual Tribal Council members. 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.

# smok signalz

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE	MEMBERS OF:
Monday, April 6.....	April 15	Indigenous Journalists Association
Wednesday, April 22.....	May 1	Oregon Newspaper Publishers Assoc.
Wednesday, May 6.....	May 15	2022 IJA General Excellence
Wednesday, May 20.....	June 1	2023 IJA General Excellence

### EDITORIAL POLICY

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**ARE YOU A CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE TRIBAL VETERAN?**

Contact the Tribal Veterans Service Office (TVSO)

To \*Add Your Name:

- To the email list
- To the mail out list
- To the t-shirt list

To Receive:

- Benefits information & updates
- Event invitations
- Veteran recognitions

\*If you are already on the list, but need to update your information, please email those changes.

Why? Because the TVSO shares information all year long about veterans benefits, events, and periodically sends veteran recognitions.

If you have any questions or want more information, email:

CTGRtribalVSO@GrandRonde.Org

TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

# IN THE FUTURE

(k<sup>h</sup>apa atqi)

**lakit-mun (April)**

- Saturday, April 4 – Tribal Housing Department Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m., covered area in Tribal housing. Mini powwow to follow at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center.
- Wednesday, April 8 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., in-person attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.
- Sunday, April 12 – General Council meeting, Lane Community College Longhouse, Eugene, 11 a.m., and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.
- Wednesday, April 22 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., in-person attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.
- Thursday, April 23 – Earth Day Jam, 5 p.m., Tribal gym.

**qwinem-mun (May)**

- Sunday, May 3 – General Council meeting, 11 a.m., in-person attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Wednesday, May 6 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., in-person attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 503-879-2304.
- Wednesday, May 20 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., in-person attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 503-879-2304.
- Monday, May 25 – Tribal offices closed in observance of Memorial Day.
- Monday, May 25 – Memorial Day Ceremony, 1 p.m., West Valley Veterans Memorial, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. Meal served at noon in the Tribal Community Center.

*To stay informed of future Tribal events, visit [www.smokesignals.org/calendar](http://www.smokesignals.org/calendar).*

# STORY IDEAS?

**Do you have Tribal story ideas you would like to see in Smoke Signals?**

Please share your suggestions at [news@grandronde.org](mailto:news@grandronde.org) or by calling Editor Danielle Harrison at 503-879-4663.

[WWW.SMOKESIGNALS.ORG](http://WWW.SMOKESIGNALS.ORG)

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

## Gas discount in Grand Ronde

Grand Ronde Tribal members, as well as Tribal and Spirit Mountain Casino employees, can receive a 30-cent per gallon discount on gasoline at the Tribally owned Grand Ronde Station convenience store. There are, however, a few rules. Tribal members and employees must go inside and show either their enrollment card or employee identification card to receive the discount. ■

# MONDAY MEET UP

UNDER THE COVERED AREA IN  
**Tribal Housing  
6th-12th Grade**

MONDAY MORNINGS  
9:50AM - 10:20AM  
**FREE BREAKFAST FOR YOUTH**

## Find us on

**OFFICIAL TRIBAL FACEBOOK PAGES**

- Smoke Signals:**  
[facebook.com/SmokeSignalsCTGR](https://facebook.com/SmokeSignalsCTGR)
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- Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department:**  
[facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Tribal-Police-Department](https://facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Tribal-Police-Department)
- Grand Ronde Employment Services**  
[Facebook.com/EmploymentServices](https://Facebook.com/EmploymentServices)

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

# CALLING ELDERS: KEEP OUR STORIES ALIVE

Our history, teachings, and ways are knowledge that must be carried forward for our children, grandchildren, and those yet to come. However, they can only live on if they are told by you.

We are seeking community elders to serve as docents who can provide museum tours, and share our traditions, history, and wisdom with public visitors and community members.

Your stories, your knowledge, and your way of teaching are irreplaceable. Without your voice, the next generation may never know the stories that shaped them.

**WHY JOIN US?**

- Pass on our history and stories how they are meant to be told
- Strengthen community connection and pride
- 4-8 hours per week, within Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-4pm [SATURDAY IS SEASONAL]
- Flexible schedule, we will work around your availability
- Support provided, you will never be alone in this work
- Training provided
- No experience necessary, just the willingness to learn and share

**Your presence is a gift we cannot replace.**

**TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT**  
Crystal Starr Fullerton  
[crystal.szczepanski@grandronde.org](mailto:crystal.szczepanski@grandronde.org)  
503-879-1349

# Food Bank news

The Grand Ronde Food Bank – iskam mək'hmək 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.”

The Food Bank will hold April food box distributions from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays. In addition, there is a light food box (mostly bread and produce) distribution from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays.

People must check in 15 minutes before closing to receive a food box on both days. 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 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 email for the Food Bank calendar and events, as well as follow the Food Bank on Facebook.

The Food Bank is an equal opportunity provider. Contact Ambrose at 503-879-3663 or 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 as needed at the Veterans House. Chair: Molly Leno.
- **Editorial Board** meets monthly. The next meeting will be held via Zoom at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 28. Chair: Mia Prickett. Contact Editorial.Board@grandronde.org for more information.
- **Education Committee** meets at 5:30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of the month in the Adult Education building. Interim Chair: Valeria Atanacio.
- **Elder Board** meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. in the Elders Activity Center. Chair: Darlene Aaron.
- **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: Reyn Leno.
- **Health Committee** meets at 10 a.m. the second Monday of the month in the Cheryle A. Kennedy Public Health Building. Chair: Darlene Aaron.
- **Housing Grievance Board** meets at 3 p.m. the third Thursday of the month in the Housing Department conference room. Chair: Harris Reibach.
- **Powwow Special Event Board** meets as needed at the Community Center. Dates vary. Contact Dana Ainam at 503-879-2037. Chair: Dana Ainam.
- **TERO Commission** meets at 10 a.m. the second Tuesday 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. Chair: Jon R. George.
- **Veterans Special Event Board** meets at 5:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month in the Quenelle House. Chair: Molly Leno.

To update information on this list, contact Smoke Signals Editor Danielle Harrison at 503-879-4663 or danielle.harrison@grandronde.org.



**2021**— The Portland Trail Blazers had 13 of their 15 players vaccinated against COVID-19 at the Tribe’s gym in late March, after the Tribe began offering some of its extra vaccine supply to the general public in February. The Trail Blazers posted news about the vaccinations and urged others to get vaccinated as well.



**2021** File photo

**2016** — Tribal Elders held a celebration of life for Elder Richard “Mushy” Ray, who was battling terminal cancer, enabling him to attend in person with his siblings and wife.

**2011** — The Grand Ronde Cultural Resources staff completed the first river canoe carved in Grand Ronde since Restoration and probably much earlier, and placed it on display at the Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill in Salem, along with the Tribe’s Tillamook canoe and a historic Kalapuya canoe owned by the Heritage Center.

**2006** — The Spirit Mountain Community Fund gave away nearly \$2 million in grants for its first quarter grant program, providing funding for outdoor recreation as an alternative to drugs for Yamhill County teens, the Fort Yamhill Interpretive Program, a new exhibit at the Oregon Coast Aquarium and numerous other programs.

**2001** — The Tribe hired a new policy and planning manager, Kim Ray Rogers, who had worked for several Tribes previously in Alaska and Washington.

**1996** — Spirit Mountain Casino embarked on phase two, which included an expansion to 36,500 feet in the casino and adding gaming, dining and a family entertainment space.

**1991** — The Tribe approved the final sketches for a proposed new Community Services Center to house programs such as senior meals, educational classes, additional health services, some social services activities and a broad range of community meetings and training seminars.

**1986** — Tribal Council remained focused on its reservation plan. Tribal Chair Mark Mercier, Vice Chair Merle Leno and Secretary/Treasurer Kathryn Harrison met with Yamhill County Commissioners to update them on progress and spent an afternoon with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to review the hunting and fishing consent decree. They also met with Cooper Consultants about setting up talks with the timber industry, whose support the Tribe was hoping to gain.

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

## NRD TELEGRAPH -

### 2026-27 HUNTING

Big Changes Are Coming.  
Are You Ready?

All hunting information communicated via the alta app, direct email or in-person.

The CTGR alta app is designed to communicate directly with our membership. To download the app, just go to your app store. To read more about this please visit the website at [www.grandronde.org/alta/](http://www.grandronde.org/alta/)



### GRAND RONDE HOUSING DEPARTMENT

28450 Tyee Road – Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347 – 503-879-2401 – Fax 503-879-5973

**ATTENTION ALL HOUSING TENANTS AND GUEST  
PLEASE SLOW DOWN IN ELDER HOUSING**

Also, please make sure and maintain low levels of music in the Elder community.

## Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. receives council approval for casino refresh

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals editor

If you build it, they will come. Or more specifically, if slot machines are located in a highly visible area, the business will likely have increased profits.

Tribal Council approved a loan to Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. for up to \$13.6 million for a remodeling project to do just that, plus a few other upgrades, at its Wednesday, March 25, meeting.

The project, referred to as a “refresh,” would include relocating the sports bar, improving entry gaming opportunities and a restroom remodel at Spirit Mountain Casino. Work is expected to be complete by December. The loan money will be taken out of the Tribe’s TriState Capital Bank line of credit.

“I’d like to take a moment to thank our executive team,” Tribal Council member and SMGI Board of Directors member Kathleen George said. “This has been a very long path to get here finally to a project that I think has very broad support. ... Also, part of this project, the relocation part, is for a very good business reason. Both with our in-house slot floor expertise and the analytics that are available these days to any modern casino, using where the sports bar currently is to have a high-energy slot floor, where the first thing people see when they walk through

the main doors of the casino are opportunities to game, is projected to bring new net revenues to our business. I really appreciate that and the forward-looking analysis of our current property and how can we use (it) to really maximize that slot revenue, which we know is the bread and butter of our business.”

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved a \$240,000 grant application to the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation for the Tribe’s Indigenous Place Keeping Fellowship, art summit support and contract art in Grand Ronde;
- Approved reappointing Tracy Moreland and Shelley Hanson to the Editorial Board with terms ending March 31, 2029;
- And approved enrolling eight infants, one emergency non-infant and 14 non-infants into the Tribe because they meet the enrollment requirements in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

Additionally, Tribal Council set the agenda for the next General Council meeting. It will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, April 12, in a hybrid format on Zoom and in-person at the Lane Community College Longhouse in Eugene and will feature a report from the Tribal Health & Wellness Department.

To watch the entire meeting, visit [www.grandronde.org](http://www.grandronde.org) and click on the Videos tab. ■

## Comment period of 30 days to be implemented before adoption

CHANGES continued from front page

change to a lot of the direct reports who report to Tribal Council will (now) be reporting to the chief of staff,” Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier said. “I think there are some other minor (changes) but that’s the big one I think people are going to want to know about. It’s a big organizational change and in order to make that change...these ordinances have to be amended.”

There will be a 30-day comment period before the proposed ordinance changes are adopted. For a copy of the ordinance, contact the Tribal Attorney’s Office at 503-879-4664 or [legal@grandronde.org](mailto:legal@grandronde.org). Send comments to the Tribal Attorney’s Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347 or by email. Comments must be received by Friday, May 1.

Additionally, proposed changes to the ordinances will be published in the April 1 and April 15 editions of Smoke Signals.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved the sale of the ina Thin logging unit to Round Valley LLC for \$93,401;

- Approved three software sovereign immunity waivers for Sundancer Solutions LLC, Google LLC/YouTube.com and Etsy Inc.;
- Approved one enrollment relinquishment request;
- Approved an agreement with ACTenviro to remove household waste from the Natural Resources Department hazardous waste collection event Saturday, March 21;
- Approved a waiver of sovereign immunity with Innova NW for security monitoring at the Great Circle Recovery Pharmacy;
- Approved a lease agreement for billboard use at the Tribe’s Enchanted Oaks conservation property in Salem;
- And approved enrolling one infant into the Tribe because they meet the enrollment requirements in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

In other news, Tribal Council approved a staff directive setting a general welfare payment of \$800 that was made to the membership Friday, March 13.

To watch the entire meeting, visit [www.grandronde.org](http://www.grandronde.org) and click on the Videos tab. ■



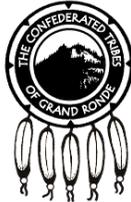
Are you frustrated with your diabetes control?  
Do you have questions about diabetes?  
Do you need help managing your diabetes?  
If so...  
Call the Medical Clinic today at 503-879-2002



**IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING...  
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.  
RECOVERY IS REAL.**

**THERE IS A WHOLE COMMUNITY READY TO WALK WITH YOU. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IS NOW OFFERING WALK-IN APPOINTMENTS FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG COUNSELING.**

**PLEASE CALL 503-879-2026 OR STOP BY THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC AT THE GRAND RONDE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER.**



### TRIBAL COMMITTEE / BOARD & COMMISSION

**Now accepting new applications**

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- Do you want to be more involved with the Tribe?
- Do you have a desire to be a part of a group to plan and be involved in Tribal activities and events?
- Are you interested in making positive changes for future generations?

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**Current vacancies:**

- Ceremonial Hunting Board – Must be a ceremonial hunter (2)
- Election Board (1) • Election Board alternates (2)
- Fish & Wildlife Committee (1) • Veterans Special Event Board\* (1)
- Powwow Special Event Board\* (3) • Health Committee\* (1)
- Housing Grievance Board\* (1) • Enrollment Committee\* (1)

---

**Board and committee requirements:** No more than three employees per board and committee. This includes all Tribal entities. \*Current vacancies with three employees.

**For questions email:**  
[shannon.ham-texeira@grandronde.org](mailto:shannon.ham-texeira@grandronde.org)

**Applications available online at:**  
[www.grandronde.org/government/tribal-council/committees/](http://www.grandronde.org/government/tribal-council/committees/)

**Applications also available in the Tribal Governance building:**  
Located at the Tribal Council office near the security desk.

# Tribe develops policy for ICE response

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Tribe has developed a policy for responding to the presence of federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents or other federal immigration authorities on campus.

It requires Tribal police to handle all interactions and bans employees from authorizing or disclosing employment information or information about Tribal membership, including current location. “Requests for such information should be directed to the human resources director or other designated authority,” it stated.

ICE agents “may enter public areas to the same extent as the general public,” as per the new policy, but may not enter non-public areas unless they present a valid signed judicial warrant – meaning one signed by a federal judge or magistrate – and it has been reviewed by Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight.

Administrative warrants, which the agency often uses, are not signed by a federal judge or magistrate, and do not authorize access to non-public areas.

The policy, developed in consultation with several department man-

agers, notes the Tribe’s sovereign status, pointing out that “Federal immigration enforcement actions on Tribal lands may occur only as permitted by federal law, Tribal law and applicable agreements (such as MOUs or cross-deputization agreements). Nothing in this policy waives Tribal sovereignty or jurisdiction.”

The policy states that, “If an employee is approached or contacted on Tribal property by anyone identifying themselves as an ICE or Border Patrol agent, the employee should ask to see identification and then shall immediately contact” Tribal Police, Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez and Human Resources Director Sarah Harvey.

Employees have the right to remain silent and should remain “professional, calm and respectful at all times.” They “should not obstruct immigration enforcement agents activities on campus.”

Interim General Manager Bryan Langley said in an announcement to employees that the Tribe is “also looking at implementing a standard response protocol, so if we send out a notification that says lockdown, everyone will know what that

means.”

Former Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem wrote in a letter sent to Tribes across the country that, “ICE does not target and will not target, Native Americans or any U.S. citizens based on appearance, ethnicity or community affiliation. To date, there have not been any ICE operations in Tribal lands.”

Noem wrote that, “ICE agents recognize Tribal identification cards and continue to acknowledge Tribal IDs as proper and accepted identification to verify citizenship status. I encourage all Native people who have a valid state driver’s license, passport or state identification card to also use those forms

of identification if approached by federal law enforcement and asked for identification.”

Some members of other Tribes have reported having the validity of their Tribal identifications denied by ICE agents or being detained. Noem dismissed those claims as “misinformation” and wrote that she was “disappointed” to see Tribal leaders whom she said had asked the Biden administration for assistance in removing cartel affiliates from Tribal lands “took Tribal council action to ban ICE from your reservations, making false claims that Tribal members have been detained by ICE, misrepresenting facts and spreading misinformation.” ■

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Grand Ronde Culture Committee

## Craft Class Days 2026

10AM-4PM – CTGR Community Center

- Sunday – January 25th
- Sunday – February 22nd
- Sunday – March 22nd
- Sunday - April 26th
- Sunday - May 31st
- Sunday - June 28th
- Sunday - July 26th
- Sunday - August 23rd
- Sunday - September 27th
- Sunday - October 25th
- Sunday - November 11th
- Sunday - December 20th

Bring your creativity, supplies, and your family.

Start a new project, continue an old one, or just spend time visiting.

A welcoming space for all Tribal households and all ages.

Reach out to the culture committee with questions-

**Pamala Warren- Chase**  
[pamala.warren-chase@thecommunityfund.com](mailto:pamala.warren-chase@thecommunityfund.com)

**Marianne Blanchard**  
[indigenoustattoo@gmail.com](mailto:indigenoustattoo@gmail.com)

**Stephanie Craig**  
[kalapuyaweaver@gmail.com](mailto:kalapuyaweaver@gmail.com)

**Molly Leno**  
[molly.leno@grandronde.org](mailto:molly.leno@grandronde.org)

## Infant Toddler Socializations

**Upcoming Socialization Dates:**  
 Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> @ 5:15pm  
 Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> @ 5:15pm  
 Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> @ 5:15pm  
 Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> @ 5:15pm

All socializations will be held in the SIS school building (old preschool)

Chinuk wawa. Culture. Community. Care

Shawash-ili?i Skul is excited to announce that we will be offering infant toddler socialization events on a monthly basis during the 2025-2026 school year! If you have a little under 3 years old that you are interested in attending Shawash-ili?i Skul in the future or that you would like to get some exposure to chinuk wawa, we encourage you to join us!

If you have any questions please call (503)879-1856 or email [chinukwawaedu@grandronde.org](mailto:chinukwawaedu@grandronde.org)

# Cole spent 22 years working for the Tribe

**RETIREMENT continued from front page**

is just very rewarding.”

Cole, a Tribal Elder, retired in February from her position as Tribal librarian due to family circumstances. She spent 22 years working for the Tribe in various capacities, with many of those years spent as a Chinuk Wawa language teacher, instructing students in preschool through adult classes.

Cole also worked at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center as a cultural education specialist and museum director. Her last position was as the Tribe’s librarian, which she began in 2020, right at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I loved all of my jobs but that job was like the best of the best,” she said. “You still got to see all the kids and the Elders, it was great.”

Her favorite memories of working at the library include compiling the summer reading packets, having events such as Blind Date with a Book and hosting different performers.

“The reading packets were a lot of work but people loved it,” Cole said. “It connected them to the library because they had to come to the library to pick up their packets. That was something we started during COVID because we weren’t open for in-person visits, so it was something we could provide. ... The performances helped connect people to literacy. ... Giving books away, getting those into people’s hands, just made me really happy.”

A major highlight was when Cole won a top librarian national contest for an all-expenses paid trip to Boston to meet with children’s author Jeff Kinney, known for his

mega-bestselling “Diary of a Wimpy Kid,” series.

Although her granddaughter’s illness resulted in Cole canceling the originally scheduled trip to Boston in June 2024, she was able to go with her son, Chris, later that summer after Kinney arranged a make-up visit.

Cole was nominated for the top librarian honor by Tribal Family Partnership Coordinator Rebecca Ambrose.

When Ambrose heard Cole was retiring, she emailed Smoke Signals the following statement.

“I’m going back through my emails and finally found that initial form I sent to nominate Kathy Cole for the ‘Diary of the Wimpy Kid’ All-Star Librarian contest,” she said. “Her services to the Tribal Library will continue to inspire Chinuk Wawa language revitalization and future generations.”

Shawash-ili?i Skul (Chinuk Wawa School) Administrator Justine Flynn first met Cole through her grandmother, Tribal Elder Jackie Whisler, who started Chinuk Wawa classes at the Tribe and walked on in 2007.

“I met her when I was young and she was the kindergarten teacher for my brother,” Flynn said. “She taught the high school Chinuk Wawa class, my sister was in the first class that went through (the program). She was very good friends with my grandma. Then I worked with Kathy when I first came back and worked with the language program.”

Flynn said that Cole has, “given her career to the Tribe in many different capacities.”

“She was instrumental in getting the (Chinuk Wawa) dictionary together,” she said. “She was integral

in working with language and being a teacher. ... She also served as the director of Chachalu, she’s always had her hand in education and always around youth. When she came back to the library, I think she found her niche a little bit and really jumped into that and tried to get the community engaged and visiting the library.”

Flynn added that many of the staff who work for the Shawash-ili?i Skul have a close relationship with Kathy.

“We will still continue to work with her and engage with her in language because that’s kind of where her passion has always been,” she said. “She’s always been in a role where she’s in service to the community and she does that thanklessly. I wanted to acknowledge how much work she’s done and how much she’s contributed.”

Tribal Library Aide Crystal Bigelow worked with Cole for several years and said she has a passion for Tribal culture.

“(It was) evident in everything she did at the library,” Bigelow said. “She had a vision to weave our culture, history and language

into the library’s programs, decor and collection. She has a passion for working with kids and brought so many engaging story times to our little ones. She wanted to make a connection with the kids so they would enjoy coming to the library and want to come back for years to come. Through her dedication, books were translated and new ones were written; because of this, our people now have access to cultural stories.”

She continued, “I learned so much from her, not only about our history and culture, but also about the impact a person can have on a community. It was truly a joy to work with Kathy, someone so devoted to building up the library as a center for our people. Whether helping a child find their new favorite book, supporting a colleague or welcoming our Elders into the library, she made the library an inviting place.”

When asked what her retirement plans were, Cole said she wasn’t quite sure.

“I don’t feel like I’m done,” she said. “I feel like I still have stuff to give and there are still things I can do. I just haven’t decided which route to take yet.” ■

## Hotel room rates increase

The Spirit Mountain Hotel at Spirit Mountain Casino has implemented a revised pricing structure for the Elders discount, which has remained unchanged since the hotel’s opening in 1997. The new discounted rates are \$99 for mid-week stays, \$109 for weekends and \$129 for holidays.

This adjustment is necessary to better align room rates with the actual cost of room upkeep, while still offering competitive pricing, according to Spirit Mountain Casino Chief Executive Officer Camille Mercier.

The Tribal member discount will reflect a 10% discount on standard room rates. The RV park will offer Elders and Tribal members a \$10 discount off the standard rate at the RV lot.

“The changes ensure that we continue to provide valuable services while maintaining financial sustainability,” Mercier said. ■



Children & Family SERVICES

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 Grand Entry Starts at 11:00am  
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Questions? Call or text Alex W. at 541-921-0610

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# NEW YORK 2026

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 503.879.1690

## Tribal charter school making progress on application

By Katherine Warren

Smoke Signals staff

Shawash-ili?i Skul Administrator Justine Flynn met with Tribal Council Thursday, Feb. 19, to go over the status of the application for the Tribe's charter school.

Flynn started with telling council about the meetings she has had, including with the Willamina School District, where charter school requirements were discussed.

"They agreed that we can do our own (special education) services in house," Flynn said. "The only way WSD is involved with the charter school (is when) they distribute the funds that will be allocated to (Shawash-ili?i Skul) by the state."

Flynn went on to discuss the support meetings that she had with Oregon Department of Education and clarified a question around the current enrollment requirements, which is to keep the numbers the way they are due to the lack of space for expansion, having to create curriculum, a lack of trained staff and financial issues.

Flynn also had a check in with the Tribal Finance Department in February to discuss specific information about what financial management system is needed for a charter school.

Council members asked Flynn about the special education services and about how helpful ODE had been through the whole process.

"They have been very helpful and it's nice to have a fellow Tribal member (April Campbell) as part of

that department to help with this transition," Flynn said.

Tribal Council Member Toby McClary inquired what the Willamina School District's response has been like.

"It became very clear to me that they have no idea about the process or policies or procedures of this charter school application," Flynn replied. "And it is something that I recommended to WSD to contact the ODE about."

Another question that was asked was the idea of having year-round school and what would that look like. Flynn went on to explain that once the Tribe officially had a charter school with kindergarten through fifth-grade students in the building, that this is something that she is thinking about doing. Flynn noted a year-round model could work because the teachers at the Tribe don't have the opportunity for three months off during the summer like those in public schools do. She noted studies that point to a loss of learning during the summer months with no education happening and said there are schools in the country that have a year-round schedule with long breaks during certain months.

The next phase in submitting the charter school application it to have the Tribal Attorney's Office and Tribal Interim General Manager Bryan Langley do a final review before sending it to Tribal Council, Flynn said. After that process, Flynn plans to submit the application to the state. ■

## Colon awareness



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

**Tribal Community Health Program Secretary Bethany McKnight touches a polyp as she walks through a giant inflatable colon during the colorectal cancer awareness event in the Tribal gym Thursday, March 26. Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Clinic's Public Health and Diabetes Prevention and Education Program, Oregon Health & Science University's Knight Cancer Institute and Northwest Tribal Comprehensive Cancer Program were a few of the resource tables offering colorectal health information. Colorectal cancer survivor and Tribal member Amber Eastman shared her story at the event that was sponsored by the clinic. March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.**

## Clothes Closet open

The Clothes Closet is open from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 2 p.m. every Friday on the Tribal campus near the Elders Activity Center at the end of Blacktail Drive. The Clothes Closet accepts clothing, small appliances and 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. ■

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# Community Fund has awarded 3,494 grants since its inception

## FUND continued from front page

sensation in the Governance Center Atrium Wednesday, March 11.

Representatives for The Homie House and Homeless Solutions of Clackamas County spoke about the vital nature of their work.

Other grants funded building financial capability among Grand Ronde youth, technical assistance for Latino entrepreneurs, health and wellness projects for Latinos in Yamhill County, granting wishes for critically ill children, protecting wildlife and more.

The Community Fund awarded seven large grants totaling \$395,467 and six small grants totaling \$33,996. Since its inception, it has awarded 3,494 grants totaling \$103,650,053.

Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George gave the invocation. Tribal Council members Kathleen George, Matthew Haller, Toby McClary and Pete Wakeland also attended the ceremony.

“There are discouraging days coming,” Kathleen George, who also serves as secretary-treasurer of the Spirit Mountain Community Fund, told the audience. “You know, the kind of days when you feel a little bit of dread when you go to turn on the news, cause you’re just not really sure what you’re gonna hear. And that doesn’t feel good. And too many days of that and I start to feel tired. I start to feel discouraged. I don’t know if any of you have felt like that at all lately, but if you have, please know that you are not alone in that.”

“But I think today, very intentionally, we are coming together to celebrate that...great work continues to happen. And that when we

come together and when we refuse to lose sight of our common calling to serve one another in community, then we can make choices that in fact can encourage us, restore our souls and restore my sense of hope.”

George told the assembled representatives for the grant recipients that, “The organizations that you represent, the work that you represent and our coming together in community around that work, that to me, is the ultimate repudiation of discouragement.”

George added that she is grateful for the perseverance of the ancestors.

“That power of persistence is never to be underestimated,” she said. “Never, and it can overcome amazing challenges and trials.”

The Homie House of Lincoln County Mentor Michaela Wood, Homeless Solutions of Clackamas County Executive Director John Duke and Homeless Solutions Coalition Board Chair Dan Fowler spoke about their programs.

Duke and Fowler explained that the coalition is building a 35,000-square-foot center in Oregon City to house multiple nonprofit agencies serving homeless residents in Clackamas County. It will include a day center, outreach program, a drug and alcohol treatment program and social services.

“If you put yourself in the life of a homeless individual, for them to gain those services is a mountain to climb,” Fowler said. “They don’t have a car in most cases. To get around from one nonprofit agency to another might be miles apart.”

Duke said the grant is “transformative.”

“Just having your name, the credibility and values that you bring to the project shine on us; we’re really

grateful and appreciative for that,” he said.

In addition, Fowler said, “We’ve also had a generous private individual who is matching several million dollars of gifts that we’ve raised.”

The Homie House is a mentoring program in Lincoln City for youth ages 14 to 21 who may be dealing with challenges in their home lives. It provides mentoring, tutoring, family-style meals and educational opportunities.

Wood read a letter from Tyler Watkins, executive director of The Homie House.

Watkins explained in the letter that \$1,500 of the grant will be used to provide shelf-stable food and \$1,000 will be used for clothing.

“We are going to provide opportunities for our youth to create their own design on our next quarter of house swag,” he said.

In addition, because the local school district is operating at a deficit for the next school year, families will have to purchase their own supplies. The Homie House plans to purchase \$2,000 worth of school supplies for families in need. It will also spend \$1,000 on recreational equipment for young people involved in its skate club, who cannot afford to purchase their equipment.

“We are beyond grateful,” Watkins said.

### Large grants recipients were:

- Corvallis Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., dba DEVNW, Polk County, for building financial capability among Grand Ronde Youth, \$50,000;
- Homeless Solutions Coalition of Clackamas County, for Care Place capital grant for integrated care, \$100,000;

- LatinoBuilt, Multnomah County, for Latino entrepreneur technical assistance, \$50,000;

- Make-A-Wish Foundation of Oregon, Inc., Multnomah County, rush wishes for children with critical illnesses, \$50,000;

- National Wildlife Federation, Washington County, for Rivers of Learning, connecting classrooms, salmon and communities; \$49,467;

- Neighbors For Kids, Lincoln County, for 2026 summer day camp, \$46,000;

- Unidos Bridging Community, Yamhill County, for health and wellness grants, \$50,000.

### Small grant recipients were:

- City of Dayton, Yamhill County, for library book repair equipment, \$1,113;

- NAMI-Clackamas, for community training for suicide and crisis intervention; \$7,383;

- Returning Veterans Project, Multnomah County, for community supported health services for veterans, \$7500;

- The Commons Law Center, Multnomah County, for TCLC and Rose Haven Collaborative, \$7,500;

- The Homie House, Lincoln County, supplies for success: Empowering youth, \$5,500;

- Yamhill County Public Health, for its suicide prevention coalition, \$5,000.

The Community Fund raffled off gifts to the attendees, presenting beaded necklaces to representatives from the National Wildlife Foundation, the Make-a-Wish Foundation and The Homie House. It presented a Tribal blanket to the Returning Veterans Project of Multnomah County. ■

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# Tribe manages forests for long-term health

By Nicole Montesano

*Smoke Signals staff writer*

Crawling through the woods on massive treads, the timber harvester, its operator hidden from view inside the cab, reaches out a single articulated arm, grabs a 40-foot Douglas fir tree and sends it toppling. It lifts it, cuts off the top, strips a way the branches and sets it on the ground to be collected later. It crawls a few feet forward, selects another tree and topples it. Branches and fir needles are strewn across the tract between the remaining trees.



Travis Trammell

A second machine collects the logs and stacks them onto a waiting truck. The debris will be left to decompose, returning nutrients to the soil.

Tribal Timber Resource Program Manager Travis Trammell stands in the muddy ruts left by the treads, watching in satisfaction. The site may look a mess now, he said, but it will soon recover and the trees left standing will benefit from increased sunlight and decreased disease pressure from overcrowding. Understory plants like hazel, osoberry and snowberry will establish themselves, providing food and habitat for wildlife.

“In a year or two, you won’t even be able to tell they were here,” he said.

Trammell and the Tribe’s Natural Resources Department are focusing their management not just on obtaining revenue from logging, but on improving overall forest health. It requires a different approach, Trammell said, one that benefits trees, wildlife and Tribal cultural practices.

That focus, he noted, has not hurt the Tribe’s ability to sell timber; if anything, it increases quality.

“We have high demand,” he said, listing companies that buy as many logs as the Tribe will sell and ask for more.

But for the Tribe, forestry is about more than money. The health of the land itself and of wildlife is equally compelling. So, there are elk meadows left among forest stands, wide riparian buffers and three times more trees left standing in clearcuts than the state minimum. More spacing between trees allows for growth of underbrush and more diversity of tree species.

“That hillside over there, they clear cut and then crammed as many Doug firs in as they could,” Trammell said, gesturing to a hill covered by the iconic dark green conifer. “But if that hillside were to regenerate on its own, it would not look like that. That hillside is not meant to support a monoculture of Doug fir.”

Douglas fir grows well in the foothills and higher slopes of the Coast Range and reseeds readily, Trammell said. But it was never the sole tree species there. The Tribe’s new 10-year forest management plan for 2024 to 2033 calls for planting just 30% Douglas fir, 30% western red cedar, 30% western hemlock and 10% other species – typically grand fir or Sitka spruce, he said.

Trammell noted it takes two years for the requested seedlings to grow before they can be planted.

“Next year will be the first year we can plant 30% of each,” he said.

Tribal Silviculture Coordinator Waylon Rich, who works in the Tribe’s silviculture program, said that previously, the Tribe planted some 90% Douglas fir, “with a sprinkling of hemlock and red cedar.”

Science backs the benefits of greater diversity, Rich said.

The hemlock and cedar will be left standing when the firs are cut and serve multiple purposes. Trammell pointed out where dying Douglas fir trees show the presence of root rot fungus. It’s found throughout the area, but is worse in certain areas and crowding helps it to spread. The Tribe is conducting an experiment; removing the dead trees and replacing them with western red cedar and western hemlock, which are more resistant to the fungus.

The Tribe maintains 11,735 acres of trust forest land, including 1,523



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

**A harvester grabs and cuts a Douglas fir tree as a thinning operation takes place on Tribal timber land Tuesday, March 17.**

acres of forest set aside for conservation, where the only logging is thinning for long-term forest health.

The 10-year plan sets an annual target of harvesting 5.02 million board feet of lumber, which counts clear cuts – referred to in the plan as “regeneration harvests” – thinning, salvage and special projects – with adjustments made as needed over time. It calls for a 70-year rotation age for clear cuts in most areas and a maximum clear-cut size of 60 acres, with 40 acres preferred.

Thinning is typically conducted on trees around 35 to 40 years old, Trammell said, although that can vary. The thinning operation was happening on a tract that had been closely planted with all Douglas fir.

“You can see there’s almost no understory,” he said. “Removing smaller trees allows those remaining to grow to high quality, healthier trees.”

Trammell said the goal is to leave about 18 to 20 feet between trees, allowing more light to reach the forest floor, spurring the growth of both the trees and other vegetation.

He noted that, “This is purely for forest health – healthy trees, good habitat for wildlife. It will be 30 years from now before somebody has to decide” whether the stand should be harvested.

Trammell compared the Tribe’s tracts to neighboring tracts owned by large timber companies or the federal Bureau of Land Management. Heavily sprayed with herbicides, they have little to no underbrush.

“All you see is trees and dead stuff,” he said. “We could get as good or better results if we could burn (the sites). ‘It’s just politically difficult for us. ... It’s starting to come back (into use). Hampton is starting to do some burns along with us.’”

Hampton Lumber owns some 100,000 acres of timberland in Oregon.

Although the Natural Resources Department does conduct some herbicide spraying, it also relies heavily on manual labor.

“...So a private landowner is gonna use the herbicide across the whole area – the Tribe doesn’t do that,” Rich said. “When we do have an herbicide application, say along the road, it’s for invasive species – Himalayan blackberries, Scotch broom and reed canary grass – and it’s specifically to keep those from spreading. We don’t do that for competing tree species – we use chainsaws for that. It’s definitely not cost effective; it’s time consuming and labor intensive, but the benefit is we’re not spraying a bunch of herbicides.” ■



**Douglas fir trees are loaded into a logging truck during a thinning operation on Tribal timber land Tuesday, March 17.**

# Tribe fetes employees for 1,141 years of service

By Nicole Montesano

*Smoke Signals staff writer*

The Tribe celebrated a combined 1,141 years of service from its 92 first quarter employees Thursday, March 19, during a breakfast in the Tribal gym.

"As I was coming through the corridor from outside, you could just hear the cheerful chatter," Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said. "It reminded me of the birds, when they're all happy, when they're ... coming together for where they're going to winter. That's what it sounded like and I thought, 'Oh, that's a great sound.'"

In addition to Kennedy, Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George and Tribal Council members Kathleen George and Matthew Haller attended the event. Jon A. George gave the invocation. The Grand Ronde Canoe Family, led by Tribal member Bobby Mercier, drummed and sang the meal song. Employees were treated to a breakfast of scrambled eggs, home fries, bacon, sausage, biscuits, gravy and fruit.

"It's good to be here, today," Kennedy said in her welcome speech. "It's always a pleasure to come before you ... to express gratitude and appreciation for all of the hard work that all of you have done, not only this year, but for many years."

Kennedy recalled in the early days when the Tribe was striving to regain its federally recognized status, "There were a lot of visions that were in our head. A lot of dreams that were talked about, staying up late at night and remember when smoking was all over the place? Well, I wasn't a smoker and I would go into our rooms, and it would just be blue with smoke."

Taking time to reflect and celebrate, she said, is necessary.

"It's always good to laugh and to enjoy, to know that you've done a good job," she said. "That creates those good feelings within us. It creates the memories. It creates the stamina to go forward another day to do all of the hard work that you do. It is hard work. I know that. Building a nation is not an easy thing."

The audience laughed sympathetically when Kennedy shared comments received recently from visiting Polk County commissioners.

"They were totally amazed at everything that Grand Ronde has. They said 'Wow, and all this happened in such a short time.' And I'm thinking, 'Short time?'" Kennedy said. "I was very young, when I was first here, in my early 30s! But now I'm almost 80. So, it's a long time."

She said she is warmed by the achievements the Tribe has been able to make in those years, citing accomplishments and projects in progress from the Health & Wellness Department, Natural Resources Department, the Tribal Grants Program and Tribal Attor-



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

**Tribal Health & Wellness Business Office Manager Melody Baker hugs Tribal Council member Matthew Haller as she's recognized for 27 years of working at the Tribe during the first quarter Years of Service awards in the Tribal gym Thursday, March 19.**



**Tribal Shawash-ili?i Skul Assistant Teacher Washie Squetimkin, right, hugs Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George as he's recognized for 10 years of working at the Tribe during the first quarter Years of Service awards in the Tribal gym.**

program manager.

**28 years:** Sunni Ulestad, billing supervisor.

**27 years:** Melody Baker, clinic business office manager.

**26 years:** David DeHart, employee relations manager; Becky Mode, compensation-HRIS specialist.

**25 years:** Angela Sears, Spirit Mountain Community Fund director.

**24 years:** William Mercier, web administrator; Jake McKnight, chief of police; Kerrina Mishler, office manager-paralegal.

**23 years:** Joshua Clift, post-secondary education coordinator.

**22 years:** Shawn Bobb, early Head Start family educator; Lisa Archuleta, Portland Tribal services representative.

**20 years:** Toni Mercier, employment specialist; Debra Nolen, staff accountant.

**19 years:** Jessy Powley, employment specialist.

**18 years:** Bart Bryant, construction supervisor; Rosie Saldivas, housekeeper; Desiree Allen, health information supervisor; Michele Volz, fish & wildlife administrator in training; Nick LaBonte, emergency assistance programs coordinator; Rachel Clark, dentist; Tyrell Soderberg, compliance analyst.

**17 years:** Kayla Leno, health care payment specialist; Lawrence Schwabe, hydrosystem compliance specialist.

**16 years:** Seth Mercier, lead shipping & receiving clerk; Leon Ramos, rental housing program manager.

**15 years:** Halona Butler, language nest lead teacher; Michael Herrin, social services employment manager; Sean Barton, employee relations specialist; Erin

Muchmore, dental hygienist.

**14 years:** Dalton Robertson, gaming inspector; Briece Edwards, historic preservation manager; Alexandria Warren-Masters, family support specialist.

**13 years:** Sean Sell, groundskeeper; Shauna Hastings, child family services investigator; Angella Schultz, vocational rehabilitation caseworker; Tiny Gibbons, employment caseworker.

**12 years:** Joseph Kelley, groundskeeper; Tyler Brown, detective; Whitney Vanarsdel, patient insurance and eligibility specialist; Jade Colton, elementary lead teacher; Jordan Smith, AV technician-web specialist.

**11 years:** Lacy Leno, housing services coordinator; Rod McAllister, police sergeant; Stephanie King, Elder justice coordinator; Zoey Holsclaw, secondary Chinuk Wawa teacher.

**10 years:** Shereena Bates, staff accountant; Mark Donahoo, senior help desk technician; Jeannette Cavan, lead licensed practical nurse; Washie Squetimkin-Anquoe, assistant teacher; Brandy Bishop, emergency preparedness coordinator.

**9 years:** Joshua Biery, family partnership specialist; Jeri St. Onge, training specialist; Jessie Storm, human resources specialist.

**8 years:** Denise Fellows, senior mental health counselor; James Flynn, police officer; Tracy Haas, early head start family educator; Jonathan R. George, compensation/HRIS specialist; Teresa Larson, lab manager; Amanda Wilson, Tribal realty specialist.

**7 years:** Benito Rodriguez, staff accountant.

**6 years:** Anne Falla, victim assistant advocate; Trinity Leno, vocational rehabilitation trainee; Bethany McKnight, secretary; Jerald Harris, enrichment coordinator; Maria Ramirez, teacher aide/bus monitor; Lisa M. Leno, facilities maintenance technician; Alisa Mull, administrative assistant; Jesse Norton, cultural protection specialist; Brian Hamlin, police officer; Shane Thomas, health & physical education coach; Devon Mercier, academic advisor; Dina Sayers, applications administrator; Dorothy De la Rosa, behavioral health program care coordinator.

**5 years:** Chrystal Grimes, mental health counselor; Manya Helman, physician; Laurie Pierson, licensed practical nurse supervisor; Brandon McDonald, staff pharmacist; Troy Grover, senior network administrator; Brandon Trombla, Emergency Services Department lieutenant; Jake Gillins, Emergency Services Department lieutenant; Tiyeh Grudzinski, lead pharmacy technologist; Donnie Duncan, radiologic technologist; Trish Squires, controller; ChyAnne Schlappie, youth prevention grant coordinator; Reece Ebensteiner, administrative assistant; Jodi Grauer, certified medical assistant; Kelly Tarr, billing and auditing specialist, Michelle Ward, substance use disorder therapist; Maria Martinez, certified medical assistant; Chrystal Shepherd, certified medical assistant. ■

# 2026 Spring Break Camp



**Tribal member Bronson Williams, 13, wraps a metal ring with leather as he makes a medicine wheel during Spring Break Camp Tuesday, March 24.**



**Tribal member Marie Quenelle, 15, covers her face as a soft-tipped arrow misses her and hits the garbage can she's standing in as her village participates an archery challenge during Spring Break Camp Tuesday, March 24.**

The Tribe's Youth Enrichment Program hayu-munk skukum held its annual Spring Break Camp at B'nai B'rith Camp in Otis Monday to Wednesday, March 23-25. About 40 sixth grade through 12th grade youth attended the camp where they were divided into "villages," Chinook, Kalapuya, Tillamook and Umpqua. The villages took part in Native activities, cultural education stations, performed team skits and competed against each other in team challenges for points.



**Tribal member Angel Mathews, 13, left, and Haideyn Markel-Hunt, 15, bead pipe cleaners as they make medicine wheels during Spring Break Camp Tuesday, March 24. The workshop was taught by Tribal Elder Deitz Peters and his wife Kathy.**



**Erik Bly shows what bone he's holding after a picker from the opposing team picked a hand while playing stick game.**



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS AND VIDEO





@SmokeSignalsCTGR @ctgrsmokesignals @SmokeSignalsCTGR

**Tribal member Marley Poff, 12, looks for confirmation that she's stepping on the correct colored square as her village takes part in the pathfinder challenge during Spring Break Camp Tuesday, March 24.**



# Tribal artists and creators invited to showcase goods at casino gift shop

Enrolled members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have an opportunity to showcase and sell authentic handmade goods at the gift shop inside Spirit Mountain Casino.

Spirit Mountain Casino is seeking Tribal artists and makers interested in participating in a consignment vendor program.

Accepted items may include artwork, jewelry, clothing, beadwork and other handcrafted goods.

Items will be reviewed by a Tribal committee and selected vendors will meet in person to learn program guidelines. All products will be sold on a consignment basis, meaning artists are paid as their items sell in the gift shop.

This program provides a great opportunity for Tribal members to share their work with thousands of casino guests while supporting authentic Tribal artistry.

For more information, contact Shauna Skinner at 503-879-3916 or email [shauna.skinner@spiritmtn.com](mailto:shauna.skinner@spiritmtn.com). ■

# Prom attire donations needed

The Tribe’s Behavioral Health Department is preparing a prom closet to ensure that every youth has the opportunity to feel confident and celebrated on their special night.

“We know that prom attire can be costly, especially for something that may only be worn once,” organizers said. “To help ease that burden, we are gathering gently used dresses, suits, shoes and accessories so our youth can choose what they need at no cost.

Donations can be dropped off at the Behavioral Health Department front desk, 9605 Grand Ronde Road. The department is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.

“Your generosity reflects the values of care, support and community that we hold close and it truly makes a difference for our young people,” organizers said.

For more information, contact 503-879-2476 or 503-879-1404. ■

# Tribal nonemergency text

The Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department has a nonemergency text line at 541-921-2927.

“If you have a nonemergency situation or question, feel free to contact my officer via text through this line,” said Grand Ronde Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight.

McKnight said that emergency situations still require calling 911. For more information, contact McKnight at 503-879-1474. ■



Tribal member Chris Rempel watches a slideshow during the exhibit opening of “CYCLE.”



Alison Dennis, executive director of Sitka Center for Art and Ecology in Otis, looks at a piece of art during the exhibit opening of “CYCLE.”

# ‘CYCLE’ now on display

The exhibit “CYCLE,” The Art of John Smith, opened at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center Thursday, March 19. It showcases paintings by Tribal Elder John Smith, who walked on in 2022. He utilized recycled materials, such as newspapers and pizza boxes, to explore art, historical events and culture. From the deeply personal to uniquely abstract, Smith’s works are an exploration of his observations, life and being. The exhibit is on display until Sept. 5.

At right, the art of Tribal Elder John Smith is on display until Sept. 5 at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo



TO SEE MORE PHOTOS AND VIDEO

@SmokeSignalsCTGR @ctgrsmokesignals @SmokeSignalsCTGR



## Watchlist: 'Native American community excited as Medicaid now covers traditional healing'

*(Editor's note: It is estimated that there are approximately 149 billion videos on YouTube and the number continues to grow. Grand Ronde Tribal member and Social Media/Digital Journalist Kamiah Koch sifts through those videos twice a month to recommend a worthwhile Indigenous video to watch. Follow her bimonthly recommendations and enjoy!)*

**By Kamiah Koch**

*Social media/digital journalist*

In early March, the New Mexico Health Care Authority announced that the state's Medicaid coverage would include traditional healing medicine for Native Americans in participating Tribes/pueblos.

Local news channel KRQE reported this update in a news clip published to YouTube Friday, March 13.

"Traditional medicine practices have been used for generations," KRQE Reporter Marilyn Upchurch said. "Healing can include herbs, prayers and ceremonies."

With this new coverage, Native American Medicaid members in New Mexico need to see providers at participating Tribal facilities to get a referral to a traditional healer.

Associate Director for the Center for Native American Health at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Norman Cooney told Upchurch he is ready to see traditional medicine recognized as legitimate healthcare.

"This policy really aligns with the health system of how Native communities understand health and healing, which is health is not just in the physical form, we have what we call relational care or self-care," Cooney said.

Taylor Russel is a University of New Mexico medical student and Native American. Russel told KRQE that her grandparents were traditional healers and as a future physician, she hopes to bridge that gap.

According to KRQE, the Navajo Nation is the first participant in the five-year program.

You can watch the entire video on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQ52QBK-YYg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQ52QBK-YYg). ■

## Spirit Mountain Community Fund seeking Hatfield Fellowship applicants

Applications for the 2026-27 Hatfield Fellowship program are being accepted through Friday, May 1. The fellowship program is funded by the Spirit Mountain Community Fund, the philanthropic arm of The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Each year, the Spirit Mountain Community Fund sponsors a highly motivated Native American to serve as the Hatfield Fellow and intern in a congressional office. Placement of the fellow rotates through the Oregon congressional delegation to enhance the mutual understanding between leadership in Washington, D.C. and Indian Country. Fellows are given an invaluable opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of how to navigate the political process in Washington, while working on issues that directly affect Native Americans.

The Hatfield Fellow will begin their Capitol Hill experience in November with a month-long orientation at the American Political Science Association, followed by an eight-month term in an Oregon congressional office. The fellowship includes a monthly stipend, relocation and travel expenses.

This life-changing opportunity is extended to Tribal members from the nine federally recognized Tribes of Oregon, as well as Tribal members from any Tribe within the United States, who are currently living within the Pacific Northwest. Preference will be given to members of Oregon Tribes. Applicants must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree (or be graduating in June 2026) and be at least 21 years of age to apply.

The Hatfield Fellowship was created in 1998 to honor Oregon Sen. Mark O. Hatfield's public service to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. For more information about the program or to apply, visit [thecommunityfund.com/grants-programs/hatfield-fellowship/](http://thecommunityfund.com/grants-programs/hatfield-fellowship/) or go to [youtu.be/9QLMuOETaaI](http://youtu.be/9QLMuOETaaI) to view a Hatfield Fellowship informational video. ■

## American Museum of Natural History internship applications open

The application for the American Museum of Natural History internship is open. The application can be found on the Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center website: <https://chachalu.org/events/amnh-internship/>

The annual internship in New York City is open to current Tribal member sophomores, juniors or seniors in high school with a GPA of 2.5 or above and who are Oregon residents.

The application deadline is 5 p.m. Monday, April 27. The internship begins in June.

For more information, contact Tribal Cultural Education Specialist Cristina Lara at 503-879-1690. ■

## Prom Closet Donations Needed

Help a student shine on prom night

Prom season is here, and we're building a **Prom Closet** to support local students who need attire for their special night.

What We're Collecting:

Gently used dresses, suits, shoes, and accessories

Where to Donate:

Drop off items at the **Behavioral Health front desk** anytime.

Your donation can make a meaningful difference for a student preparing for prom. Thank you for supporting our youth!

If have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Tannith ~503 879 2476 or Sydney~ 503 879 1404

## GRAND RONDE FREE SPAY & NEUTER CLINIC MAY 23-24, 2026



### FREE SERVICES INCLUDE:

- 🐾 Spay or neuter surgery
- 🐾 Vaccinations
- 🐾 Microchip
- 🐾 Flea and tick treatment

### WHO QUALIFIES:

- ✓ Pets 5 years old or younger
- ✓ Pets 60 lbs or less
- ✓ Must live on Grand Ronde or zip code 97347

REGISTER NOW



[firstnationsvet.com](http://firstnationsvet.com)

Help keep your pets healthy and your community strong.





**Woman's Gathering**  
**Plankhouse**  
 Every  
 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Wednesday  
 12pm~1pm

And at the  
**Chachalu**  
 Every  
 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 &  
 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Wednesday  
 12pm~1pm

If you would like to bring food to share please do

## Tribal Library merges with Regional Library Service

The Tribal Library has merged with the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service. Tribal members can now get books from libraries in Polk, Yamhill and Marion counties, as well as access to many free programs. Tribal Library patrons should visit the Tribal Library and update their information and obtain a new Regional Library Service card. For more information, contact 503-879-1488. ■

## 2026 / 2027 LIHEAP

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

- Income criteria apply.
- Does not require Shut-off Notice.
- Is a "first, come first served" program.
- Assists Tribal members in the 7 county service area (Polk, Yamhill, Marion, Tillamook, Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas).
- Adult Tribal Members name (adult CTGR tribal member who lives at home) MUST be on the billing statement or Authorized User on the utility account.
- If no adult Tribal Member is in the home, family can still apply if there is a CTGR Tribal Member youth in the home. Must provide documentation of child living in the home.
- LIHEAP assists with electric, natural gas, propane, pellet, oil, or wood
- Typically, LIHEAP is open from October 1<sup>st</sup> (or when funded) and ends September 30<sup>th</sup> or when funds have been depleted (whichever comes first).
- If client has received LIHEAP or LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) as of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, from another agency, they are not eligible to apply through the CTGR Social Services for regular LIHEAP assistance.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

FUNDS FOR THIS PROGRAM ARE LIMITED. STRONGLY ADVISE ALL HOUSEHOLDS TO CONTINUE PAYING YOUR UTILITY BILL UNTIL THE LIHEAP APPLICATION HAS BEEN DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES AND A CREDIT FROM LIHEAP HAS BEEN APPLIED TO YOUR ACCOUNT.

For an application contact:

Confederated Tribes of Grand  
 Ronde Social Service Department  
 9615 Grand Ronde Rd.  
 Grand Ronde OR 97347  
 1-800-242-8196 or (503) 879-2034 Fax: (503) 879-2127 Email: [SSDInfo@grandronde.org](mailto:SSDInfo@grandronde.org)



**2026**  
**clear clinic**

**Services Provided:**

- Criminal record expungements
- Eviction expungements
- And tenant advocacy letters
- Court fines and fee waiver petitions
- Legal name and gender marker changes
- Referrals for other legal services

**There is an Oregon State police charge of \$33 for finger printing for all criminal expungements**

Cash, Card or Money order

**Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup> 3-7 pm**  
**Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup> 10am -2pm**

Gym Building I  
 9615 Grand Ronde Road  
 Grand Ronde, OR



## West Valley Veterans Memorial Application

Deadline is January 15, 2027

Name (as desired on memorial): \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: Male/Female (Circle) \_\_\_\_\_

Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Branch: \_\_\_\_\_ Honorable: Yes/No (Circle) \_\_\_\_\_

DOE: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of entry: \_\_\_\_\_

DOS: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of separation: \_\_\_\_\_

Deceased: Yes/No (Circle) \_\_\_\_\_ Place of burial: \_\_\_\_\_

CTGR Tribal: Yes/No (Circle) \_\_\_\_\_ If Tribal, Roll# \_\_\_\_\_

\*All applicants must submit a copy of their DD214. If applicant is deceased, a family member or spouse can submit a copy of their DD214. If you are a CTGR Tribal member please attach a copy of your Tribal ID. If you are non-Tribal please attach a copy of a bill/record with your name and address showing you had lived or now reside in Grand Ronde, Willamina or Sheridan. Please send application and all documents to Grand Ronde Veterans SEB, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR, 97347. If you have any questions, please contact Chelsea Clark at 503-879-1418 or e-mail: [publicaffairs@grandronde.org](mailto:publicaffairs@grandronde.org)

Any applications received after January 15, 2027, will be kept on file for inclusion to the Memorial in 2028.

# The Village

k<sup>h</sup>anamakwst nsayka chaku-hayash  
(Together We Grow Stronger)

If you are currently unhoused and a Grand Ronde Tribal Member - The Village could be a resource for you

The Village is intended to provide support services to unsheltered/houseless Grand Ronde tribal members.

The Village will provide case management and wrap services intended to move the population towards permanent housing and wellness.

Each applicant will go through an application process which will include a limited background check, prior to move in.



For more information please call :  
Grand Ronde Behavioral Health  
503-879-2026

## AIR PURIFIERS AND HEALTHY HOMES

**Income Restrictions Do apply**

**Just In Time for the Colder Months!**

Public Health is thrilled to announce that we have air purifiers available for low-income tribal households through our Healthy Homes grant! Interested participants need to fill out the form at the QR code below and then will be contacted when the air purifiers are ready to be picked up. Please note that you will need to make a free account to fill out the form.



For More Information Contact  
Nick Oldenbourg (503)-879-6716  
nicholas.oldenbourg@grandronde.org



# DISCOVER RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY

## Navigate Life After Military Service at

# BeyondTheMilitaryUniform.com



*Paid for by the Oregon Charitable Checkoff  
Fund for Veteran Suicide Prevention*



# Reading volunteers needed

Children's literacy nonprofit SMART Reading is seeking volunteers to read with students weekly at Grand Ronde Head Start. Reading is an essential skill for kids, helping them start and stay on a path to success in school and beyond, according to a press release from the organization.

"Volunteering with SMART Reading is a fun, meaningful way to impact kids right here in our community," Michael Finlay, Interim Program Manager for SMART's northwest area, said. "I regularly have volunteers tell me that the hour they spend at SMART is the best part of their week."

The time commitment is one hour per week. To learn more, contact 971-634-1628 or visit [www.SMARTReading.org](http://www.SMARTReading.org).

# Health & Wellness Center entrance

**Reminder:** The drive-through entrance at the Health & Wellness Center is for loading and unloading only. The entrance was built with our Elders and those with mobility issues and their ease of access in mind.

If you are coming to the center to pick up prescriptions, please park in one of our regular parking spaces. ■




## 2026 SUMMER YOUTH INTERNSHIP

**APPLICATION DATE TO APPLY: APRIL 3 - 17**

**INTERNSHIP JUNE 8 - AUGUST 14**

**Program Requirements**

- Complete application online
  - Please note: When you apply, use your personal email, not a parent/guardian email. Also, please opt in for text messaging to receive updates and notifications from Employment
- Complete Interview. Mark your Calendar! May 5<sup>th</sup> 4pm Tribal Gym
- Complete onboarding process
- Attend orientation (first day of work)
- Attend 5 mandatory Professional Development trainings (dates, times, location TBD)
- Complete Exit essay of work experience at end of Internship

For General Questions email [youthenrichment@grandronde.org](mailto:youthenrichment@grandronde.org)

For Application/Hiring Process Questions email [employmentteam@grandronde.org](mailto:employmentteam@grandronde.org)

### Who Is This Program For?

For CTGR Tribal Member youth between the ages of 14-18 at the time employment starts and will be enrolled in the 9-12 grades for the 2026-2027 school year.

### What Types Of Internships Will Be Offered?

There will be a limited number of internships at various CTGR departments. Job areas include Facilities, Health Care, Education, Natural Resources, Culture, Spirit Mountain Community Fund etc.. Please note that some positions may have a minimum age requirement.

### When Will I Be Notified for the Job That I Have Applied For?

Once the application has been received, a follow up email will be sent with key information and next steps.

### Tribal Youth, Do You Need Help Completing Your Application?

We are here for you! If you need support in this area, please email [youthenrichment@grandronde.org](mailto:youthenrichment@grandronde.org). Please reach out to us to schedule an appointment with staff to help guide you through the application process.

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apply online at: [www.grandronde.org/government/employment](http://www.grandronde.org/government/employment)

Position Title	Grade	Min. Start Wage	Max Start Wage	Closing Date
Administrative Assistant – Vocational Rehab	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	03/30/2026
Assistant Teacher	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	03/30/2026
Cashier/Fueler – Part Time (Variable Shifts)	3	\$16.04/hr.	\$16.04/hr.	03/30/2026
Certified Medication Aide – Adult Foster Care	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	Until Filled
CFS Caseworker – Portland Office	11	\$68,091.85/yr.	\$87,692.49/yr.	Until Filled
Cook – Adult Foster Care	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	Until Filled
Enrichment Coordinator Aide – Part Time	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	Until Filled
Enrollment Officer	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	03/23/2026
Firefighter/Paramedic	11	\$68,091.85/yr.	\$87,692.49/yr.	Until Filled
Forestry Technician (Entry Level Fire Suppression/Prevention) – Seasonal/Limited Duration	6	\$20.75/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	Until Filled
Forestry Technician (Intermediate Level Fire Suppression/Prevention) – Seasonal/Limited Duration	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	Until Filled
Forestry Technician (Engine Boss/Crew Boss/EMT) – Seasonal/Limited Duration	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	Until Filled
Infant/Toddler Teacher	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	03/23/2026
Maintenance Technician	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	03/30/2026
Pharmacy Technician	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	Until Filled
Physician – Health & Wellness	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$330,026.39/yr.	Until Filled
Physician – Salem Primary Care	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$330,026.39/yr.	Until Filled
Preschool Teacher	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor – Full Time	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	03/30/2026
Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor - Part Time	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	Until Filled
Youth Crew Leader – Limited Duration (Seasonal)	3	\$20.00/hr.	\$20.00/hr.	03/30/2026
Youth Crew Member – Limited Duration (Seasonal)	1	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	03/30/2026
Temporary Pool	2	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	
Certified Medical Assistant – Salem Detox – GCR	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	03/23/2026
Clinic Manager – Salem - GCR	14	\$90,630.26/yr.	\$116,255.21/yr.	Until Filled
Clinic Manager – Salem Detox – GCR	14	\$90,630.26/yr.	\$116,255.21/yr.	03/23/2026
Clinical Supervisor – Salem - GCR	11	\$68,091.85/yr.	\$87,692.49/yr.	Until Filled
Cook – Salem Detox – GCR	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	03/23/2026
Licensed Practical Nurse - Salem Detox - GCR	12	\$36.01/hr.	\$46.31/hr.	Until Filled
Medical Director – Salem OTP - GCR	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$330,026.39/yr.	Until Filled
Millieu Safety Technician – Salem Detox – GCR	6	\$20.75/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	Until Filled
Physician – Salem - GCR	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$330,026.39/yr.	Until Filled
Physician Assistant – Salem - GCR	20	\$151,691.92/yr.	\$205,141.88/yr.	Until Filled

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde offers generous benefits and competitive pay. POSTINGS ARE OPEN UNTIL FILLED & WILL BE REMOVED WITHOUT NOTICE.

INTERVIEWS WILL BE GIVEN IN THE FOLLOWING RANKING ORDER:  
 1. Grand Ronde Tribal members.  
 (Qualified Grand Ronde Tribal members who show they meet the minimum qualifications of the position during the course of the screening and interview process will be given first consideration for hire and the recruitment process will end)  
 2. Tribal member spouses, parents and/or legal guardians of Grand Ronde Tribal member children & current regular Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde employees.  
 3. External candidates including current Spirit Mountain Casino employees.




# WELLNESS WARRIOR LOGO CONTEST

Eligibility: Native Youth ages 10-24

Deadline: FRIDAY APRIL 17TH

Submissions:

email to [YEP@grandronde.org](mailto:YEP@grandronde.org)

OR

Drop off at Community Center

SHOW US what being a #WellnessWarrior means to YOU.

Winner will receive a \$100 giftcard AND their logo will be used on t-shirts for our annual tush tæmtæm jam!








POSTING TITLE	CLOSE DATE	WAGE/SALARY
Bellstaff (*Part-Time)	3/26/2026	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Cage Cashier (*Part-Time)	3/26/2026	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Count Operation Attendant I	3/26/2026	\$18.55/hr. DOE
Hospitality Attendant II WEX (*Part-Time)	3/26/2026	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Host/Hostess Cashier (*Part-Time)	3/26/2026	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Hotel Houseperson	3/26/2026	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Hotel Room Attendant (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	3/26/2026	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Surveillance Agent II	3/26/2026	\$18.82/hr. DOE
Table Games Assistant Manager	3/26/2026	\$63,586.43/yr. DOE
Amore Waitstaff (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$15.05/hr. DOE + Tips
Assistant Casino Controller	Until Filled	\$69,737.82/yr. DOE
Assistant Food and Beverage Manager	Until Filled	\$48,329.22/yr. DOE
Cook (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Mountain View Sports Bar Waitstaff (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$15.05/hr. DOE
Prep Cook (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.02/hr. DOE

\$1,000 Hire-On Bonus All Positions

\$500 Referral Bonus SMC & CTGR Employees

\*Part-time employees are eligible for a 20% differential pay to their base wage if they are scheduled to work up to 29.99 hours per week.

**SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

- ✓ SMGI adheres to a Tribal hiring preference policy for enrolled members of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon. Please reference the Job Description for job duties, qualifications, and required knowledge/skills.
- ✓ Job postings are updated every Friday with remaining and new positions; applications must be received by 5:00pm on the following Thursday to be considered.
- ✓ Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- ✓ All positions are eligible for an incremental Hire-on Bonus

✉ [employmentteam@spiritmtn.com](mailto:employmentteam@spiritmtn.com)    <https://www.spiritmountain.com/careers>

Call (503) 879-3737 for application assistance.

## Walking On...

### Lanny 'Butch' Leroy Thomas

Aug. 3, 1942 – March 7, 2026

Tribal Elder Lanny "Butch" Leroy Thomas, 83, a longtime resident of Grays Harbor, Washington, died March 7, 2026, at his home.

Lanny was born Aug. 3, 1942, in Aberdeen, Washington, to Frank S. and Mathilda A. (Cunningham) Thomas.

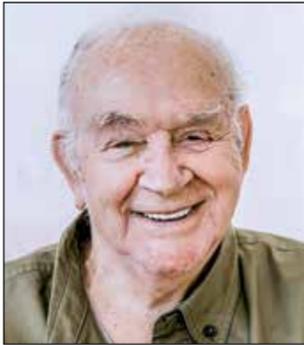
Lanny served in the U.S. Navy until his discharge in December 1967. He worked in the logging industry in his younger years until later when he operated his own automotive repair shop.

He had a love for cars and always had several projects in the works.

In addition to his wife, Peggy, surviving relatives include a daughter, Shelley (Jason) Haddix, of Castle Rock, Washington; a son, Terry (Lisa) Thomas, of Woodland, Washington; two sisters, Lana Takhar of Grand Ronde and Mary Emerson, of Van Nuys, California; and three grandchildren, Tyler Boatsman, Bryan Thomas and Elizabeth Thomas.

Lanny was preceded in death by his first wife, Judy (Stoken); grandson, Aaron Boatsman; and siblings, Delcie Totten, Frank "Buck" Thomas and Eileen Nichols.

A celebration of life was held at Rotary Log Pavilion in Aberdeen Sunday, March 22. A private urn committal at Hoquiam's Sunset Memorial Park will take place later. Cremation arrangements are by Harrison Family Mortuary in Aberdeen.



### Larry Douglas Cole

Dec. 29, 1935 – March 21, 2026

Tribal Elder Larry Douglas Cole walked on March 21, 2026, at the age of 90.

A memorial service was held Friday, March 27, in the Tribal gym, followed by a gravesite service at the Tribal Cemetery. A meal followed at the Elders Activity Center.

Bollman's Tribute Center is assisting the family.

## We want to hear from you!

The Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center Comment Box is located at the entrance of the Health & Wellness Center, next to the drinking fountain. Share your experience, good or bad with us. ■

**JOIN US AT THE TRIBAL MARKETPLACE SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO**

We are excited to announce we will be having **TWO Tribal Marketplaces at SMC this year!**

**EVENT #1 MAY 22-24 AND EVENT #2 DECEMBER 11-13**

Please contact Shauna Skinner via email: [shauna.skinner@spiritmtn.com](mailto:shauna.skinner@spiritmtn.com) to get your registration form.

Space will be limited to one table with a rack on one side of your table. You may get on a waiting list for a second table.

Thank You ~ Shauna

## Upcoming Chachalu Friday Marketplace vendors wanted

Request a vendor application starting Wednesday, April 1. Email [chachalu.marketplace@grandronde.org](mailto:chachalu.marketplace@grandronde.org) or contact Kyoni Mercier for more information at 503-879-2226.

**Chachalu Friday Marketplace**  
FOOD // ART // CRAFTS

**UPCOMING MARKETS**

- May 8
- June 12
- July 31
- August 28
- September 11
- October 9
- November 6
- December 11 // Holly Jolly

**10 AM-4PM | RAIN OR SHINE**  
In case of rain, we'll be in the Chachalu Gym.

VENDOR INFO / [CHACHALU.MARKETPLACE@GRANDRONDE.ORG](mailto:CHACHALU.MARKETPLACE@GRANDRONDE.ORG) 8720 GRAND RONDE ROAD, GRAND RONDE, OREGON



**Elderberry Wisdom Farm**  
Traditional Ecological Knowledge Summer Internship Opportunity  
June 30, 2026 – August 27, 2026

The Native American nonprofit, Elderberry Wisdom Farm, is recruiting Native American and other interns interested in conservation career pathways to apply for our 2026 Summer TEK Workforce Development Internship. Classes are held three days a week with a monthly stipend of \$1,500, although some interns may opt to work four days weekly for a \$2,000 monthly stipend.

Interns will learn to integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge and climate adaptation practices into restoration projects, including urban forestry, native plant nursery development, organic farming and micro-enterprises. Culturally tailored classroom education, experiential service-learning work and mentoring will strengthen their conservation workforce readiness. Interns will also participate in additional service-learning and community outreach activities with partners, including Oregon Department of Forestry: Urban & Community Forestry Program and City of Salem: Urban Forestry.

- Diverse and exciting activities will include:
- \* Learning to cultivate native tree, shrub and pollinator species at our Native American Plant Nursery
  - \* Learning to mentor high school youth as they explore conservation careers through urban forestry
  - \* Helping us prepare to teach tree canopy development to students in local schools
  - \* Help us plan a Farm Open House and Harvest Celebration at our newest farm, Geercrest Farm
  - \* Providing Blue Elderberry Farm herbal products at local Farmers Markets in Salem and Corvallis
  - \* Volunteer learn TV production serving on our local TV show: Elderberry Wisdom TV Program

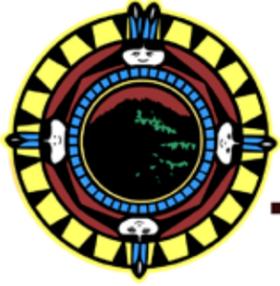
Applications will continue to be accepted until June for this paid internship opportunity. Candidates must live near training and work sites in or near Salem, Oregon in Oregon's Willamette Valley or be willing to move to the surrounding area to participate. If you are interested in applying or have questions, feel free to contact us. More information about the opportunity is available in our monthly newsletters and at our website [www.elderberrywisdom.org](http://www.elderberrywisdom.org). You can also send your resume and letter of interest to us by email at [accounts@elderberrywisdom.org](mailto:accounts@elderberrywisdom.org) and request an interview.



Left image: Our brilliant Summer 2025 TEK Interns



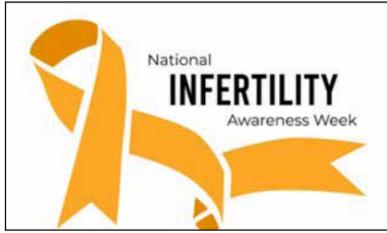
Right: Winter Our amazing new 2026 TEK Interns



# HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS

## National Infertility Awareness Week

National Infertility Awareness Week, April 19-25, is a time to talk about infertility and support people who are trying to have a baby. Infertility means not being able to get pregnant after trying for one year, or six months for people over age 35.



Infertility is common and can affect anyone. It is a medical condition, not a personal failure. Both women and men can have fertility problems. Many health issues, such as hormone problems, infections or chronic illness, can affect fertility.

Infertility can also affect mental and emotional health. People may feel sad, stressed or alone. Talking with a doctor, counselor or trusted person can help. Support groups can also provide comfort and understanding.

There are steps people can take to support fertility health:

- Visit a health care provider for regular checkups.
- Eat healthy foods and stay active.
- Avoid smoking, drugs and too much alcohol.
- Manage stress when possible.
- Ask a doctor about fertility concerns early.

National Infertility Awareness Week reminds us that infertility is a health issue that deserves care, understanding and support. Learning about fertility health can help people make informed choices and seek help when they need it. ■

## Attention pharmacy locker users

The pharmacy department has a policy regarding perishable items that are placed in the lockers. In an effort to ensure that these medications are stored properly, items left in a locker for more than 48 hours will be overnighted free of charge to the patient's address on file. Patients who leave perishable items in the lockers beyond 48 hours will also be restricted from having refrigerated items placed in the lockers for six months. Pick up or mail delivery options are available for these items during that time.

### 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.

### Vitamin b12 Shots

## Now Offered at GRHWC Public Health

**What is Vitamin B12?**  
Vitamin B12 is a water-soluble vitamin that helps us make red blood cells, supports our nerve cells, and helps keep our heart and blood vessels healthy. We get B12 from animal-based foods like meat, eggs, and dairy, as well as fortified foods where B12 is added such as cereals and beverages.

Low B12 levels can cause fatigue, numbness, tingling, memory issues, muscle weakness, and depressed mood. B12 can be low in those eating vegan/vegetarian diets, older adults, those with digestive issues, or those taking medications such as metformin or proton pump inhibitors.

B12 helps keep our heart and blood vessels healthy.

Low B12 levels can cause fatigue, numbness, tingling, memory issues, muscle weakness.

Generally, side-effects are uncommon, often mild, and usually resolve within a few days of treatment.

Grand Ronde Health and Wellness Center Public Health

Call Us to make an appointment  
**(503) 879-6701**

Disclaimer: Most insurance companies will cover your B-12 shot.

## Opioid Medication Education

Opioid medications may help some people manage pain and improve their daily function. Your provider may prescribe them for a short period of time or long-term use depending on your health condition. Opioids can be used safely under close medical supervision.

**Possible side effects of opioid medications include:**

- Slowed or difficult breathing
- Slow heart rate
- Confusion
- Constipation
- Excess sweating
- Dizziness or drowsiness
- Nausea
- Difficulty urinating
- Impaired judgement
- Vomiting
- Physical or psychological dependence

There are possible adverse effects of opioid medications that are potentially dangerous. Our medical providers at Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center consider your safety and health their top priority. Long-term prescribing of opioids requires a Pain Medication Agreement that is signed annually. This provides education as well as controlled medication rules to keep you safe. We also have Narcan available that is used to reverse the effects of a potential life-threatening opioid emergency.

**Controlled medication rules include:**

- Taking your medication only as prescribed with no early refills.
- The use of only one pharmacy and to notify your provider of any pharmacy changes.
- Tell your provider about all other medications you are taking.
- Store your medications safely as lost or stolen medications will not be replaced.
- Avoid alcohol, street drugs, or medications not prescribed to you.
- Agree to random drug testing.
- Contact your doctor in emergencies and report any additional pain medication if prescribed by another provider.

**Opioid pain medication may be stopped if:**

- You misuse, share, or sell your medication.
- You fail a drug test or refuse to provide a urine sample.
- You miss a lot of scheduled appointments or break the pain medication agreement.
- Your provider determines the risks outweigh the benefits of taking opioid medication.

## DIABETES EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

April 2026

### Alcohol Awareness

April is Alcohol Awareness Month a national initiative aimed at reducing the stigma of addiction, providing education on misuse, and encouraging healthier habits. Excessive alcohol use is the third-leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., causing roughly 95,000–140,000 deaths annually. Key focus areas include preventing underage drinking, recognizing signs of addiction, and understanding the risks of binge drinking.

Despite the potential health perks of drinking alcohol, there are some cautions as well. The biggest concern is hypoglycemia (low blood glucose). When drinking alcohol is combined with the medications most often used to treat diabetes—particularly insulin and sulfonylureas, low blood glucose can result. While a glass of wine with dinner probably isn't a big deal, a mojito on an empty stomach at happy hour is.

**"Rethink Your Drink" is a Public Health Initiative encouraging people to replace sugary drinks—soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, and specialty coffees—with healthier alternatives like water. The goal is to reduce consumption of added sugars, which are linked to obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.**

### Upcoming Events

- 4/16 STI prevention event
- 4/20 monthly meeting 12:30-1:30
- 4/23 Earth Day Jam 5/7pm gym
- 4/27 Mobile Mammograms
- 4/29 Fentanyl Awareness Day

### Contact Info

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[jeannette.cavan@grandronde.org](mailto:jeannette.cavan@grandronde.org)

Phone: 503-879-2002



# SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE · SMOKE SIGNALS.ORG

## NEW NAVY ZIP-UP HOODIES AND T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE



NAVY ZIP-UP:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



TEAL ZIP-UP:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



GRAY ZIP-UP:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



BLACK ZIP-UP:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



BLACK PULL-OVER:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



NAVY T-SHIRT:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



TEAL T-SHIRT:  
FRONT GRAPHIC



GRAY T-SHIRT:  
FRONT GRAPHIC



BLACK T-SHIRT:  
FRONT GRAPHIC



BLACK T-SHIRT:  
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC

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Please mail to: Smoke Signals Publications Dept., 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347

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ZIP-UP HOODIE (TEAL) \$35								Not Available
ZIP-UP HOODIE (NAVY) \$35								Not Available
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T-SHIRT (BLACK) FRONT GRAPHIC \$15								
T-SHIRT (GRAY) FRONT GRAPHIC \$15								
T-SHIRT (TEAL) FRONT GRAPHIC \$15								
T-SHIRT (NAVY) FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC \$15								Not Available

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