



Youth grantmakers
celebrate another
year of giving
— pg. 8

AUGUST 15, 2026



SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

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

Nisqually Tribe welcomes canoe families



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Trinity Leno dances during the Grand Ronde Canoe Family's protocol of the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey hosted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe in Washington, Sunday, Aug. 2. See story and more photos on pages 10-11.

SEE MORE OF THIS STORY

Visit **YouTube**
@SmokeSignalsCTGR



Progress continues on tumwata village

By Alexander Bliven

Smoke Signals intern

Progress on tumwata village continues as the Tribe, in partnership with Oregon City, moves forward with the next phase of restoring public access to Willamette Falls.

The Tribe purchased the 23-acre riverside property, the former site of the Blue Heron Paper Mill, in 2019.

The falls, part of lands originally belonging to Tribal ancestors from the Charcowah Village of the Clowewalla (Willamette band of Tumwaters) and the Kosh-huk-shix Village of Clackamas people, have long been central to Tribal life in the area.

Since 2021, decaying remains of buildings, contaminants and other debris at the former mill site have been steadily cleared to make way for tumwata village.

The village, planned as a mixed-use development, will include residential housing, commercial space, gathering spaces and a riverwalk that will restore public access to Willamette Falls for the first time in generations.

On May 28, a groundbreaking



Ryan Webb

See **VILLAGE**
continued on page 7

Tribe sends crews to help with wildfire suppression efforts

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde has been sending out fire engines and crews to help with the massive fires burning across Central and Eastern Oregon, as well as to Washington, Tribal Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Brandy Bishop and General Manager Bryan Langley told Tribal Council during a Tuesday, July 28, Legislative Action Committee meeting.

More than 1.1 million acres have burned in Oregon so far this year, Bishop said, affecting several Tribes. By Monday, Aug. 3, that total had surpassed 2 million acres, but Bishop said during a report to the Legislative Action Committee on Tuesday, Aug. 4, that evacuation orders were being reduced for the Burns Paiute, Warm Springs and Umatilla reservations.

"We continue to support statewide operations

while maintaining readiness" locally, Bishop said.

The Tribe's Natural Resources Department Manager Colby Drake and Fire Management and Protection Program Manager Andrew Puerini reported at LAC that the Tribe's wildland fire division currently has six engines deployed to three different fires, along with 49 Tribal staff members.

Currently, Drake said, "there are 99 large uncontained fires burning" across the country, with the majority located in Washington and Oregon.

The Tribe has been closing some gates in its

See **FIRES**
continued on page 9

Grand Ronde wildland firefighter crew members, front to back, Michael Fox, Aiden House and Loren Holmes put out hot spots while deployed to the Hat Fire in Malheur County recently.



Courtesy photo by Jim Pinder

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday meetings
DATE **TIME**
Wednesday, Aug. 26.....4 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 9.....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.

Attention Grand Ronde housing applicants

If you were accepted to be on our waitlist before 2026 and have not turned in your waitlist update letter, contact the Tribal Housing Department immediately. We must update this information every year in order to keep our list up to date and have accurate contact information for when your name comes to the top of the waitlist. This is our last effort to reach the few that have not responded to mail, phone or email. If you have not turned in the form and do not contact the housing department by Tuesday, Sept. 1, your name will be removed from the waitlist.

Please note it is your responsibility to update housing with your contact information. ■

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:
Thursday, Aug. 20.....	Sept. 1	Indigenous Journalists Association
Thursday, Sept. 3	Sept. 15	Oregon Newspaper Publishers Assoc.
Tuesday, Sept. 22.....	Oct. 1	2022 IJA General Excellence
Wednesday, Oct. 7	Oct. 15	2023 IJA General Excellence

EDITORIAL POLICY

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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
503-879-1349



2026 TRIBAL COUNCIL

tribalcouncil@grandronde.org

CHERYLE A. KENNEDY Tribal Council Chairwoman — ext. 2352 cheryle.kennedy@grandronde.org	KATHLEEN GEORGE — ext. 2305 kathleen.george@grandronde.org
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	TOBY MCCLARY — ext. 2353 tobymcclary@grandronde.org

IN THE FUTURE



(k^hapa atqi)

stuxtkin-mun (August)

- Friday-Sunday, Aug. 14-16 – Grand Ronde Contest Powwow, uyx-at Powwow Grounds, 9600 SW Hebo Road. Grand entries are at 7 p.m. Friday, 1 and 7 p.m. Saturday and 1 p.m. Sunday.
- Friday, Aug. 21 – Grand Ronde Education Summit, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Spirit Mountain Casino, 27100 SW Salmon River Highway.
- Wednesday, Aug. 26 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.

kwayts-mun (September)

- Monday, Sept. 7 – Tribal offices closed in observance of the Labor Day holiday.
- Wednesday, Sept. 9 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Saturday, Sept. 12 – Tribal Election Day. 503-879-2271.
- Sunday, Sept. 13 – General Council meeting, 11 a.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Wednesday, Sept. 16 – Tribal Council swearing in-ceremony, 11 a.m., Tribal Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Wednesday, Sept. 16 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Friday, Sept. 25 – Tribal offices closed in observance of National Native American Day.
- Wednesday, Sept. 30 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.

To stay informed of future Tribal events, visit www.smokesignals.org/calendar.

Tribal election office open until Sept. 12

The Tribal Election Board office is open through Saturday, Sept. 12. Office hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday to Thursday.

The office is located in the Tribal Community Center at 9615 Grand Ronde Road. The phone number is 503-879-2271.

Blank signature verification forms have been placed in a hanging basket outside the Election Board’s office. Complete signature verification forms, with a notarized signature or legible copy of identification that includes your signature, such as a driver’s license, Tribal ID, passport, etc. need to be mailed to the Election Board for processing. The form will not be processed unless it has been notarized or includes a legible copy of your ID to match signatures.

To request a signature verification form by phone or email, contact the Election Board at 503-879-2271 or election.board@grandronde.org.

Ballots were mailed to voters with verified signatures Wednesday, July 29. Tribal members can submit a verified signature form at any time up to and including election day, which is Saturday, September 12.

There will be a ballot box in the Governance Center during election season and one in the Community Center on election day to drop ballots off.

Ballots will be available, as they have been in the past, for Tribal members who prefer to vote in person. It is the voter’s responsibility to ensure their ballot is received by the Election Board on or before election day.

Remember, if you use the post office, all mail must go through Portland to be sorted before returning to Grand Ronde, so make sure your ballot is in the mail a few days early. ■

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. “When one of my officers receives the text, they will call you back when they have time.”

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

Find us on



OFFICIAL TRIBAL FACEBOOK PAGES

Smoke Signals:
facebook.com/SmokeSignalsCTGR

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde:
facebook.com/CTGRgov

Grand Ronde Health & Wellness:
facebook.com/GRHWC

Grand Ronde Children & Family Services:
facebook.com/CTGRCFS

Grand Ronde Royalty:
facebook.com/CTGRRoyalty

Grand Ronde Education Programs:
facebook.com/CTGREducation

Grand Ronde Youth Council:
facebook.com/CTGRYouthCouncil

Grand Ronde Station:
facebook.com/GrandRondeStation

Grand Ronde Social Services Department:
facebook.com/CTGRSocialservices

Grand Ronde Food Bank:
facebook.com/GrandRondeFoodBank

Spirit Mountain Community Fund:
facebook.com/SpiritMountainCommunityFund

Grand Ronde Cultural Education:
facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Cultural-Education

Grand Ronde Community Garden:
facebook.com/GrandRondeCommunityGarden

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

Grand Ronde Employment Services
Facebook.com/EmploymentServices





LISTEN

TO TRIBAL COUNCIL
CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS



Lisa Leno



Denise Harvey



Christopher Bailey



Pamala Warren-Chase



Valeria Atanacio

Listen to the Smoke Signals candidate interviews wherever you listen to podcasts or at <https://www.spreaker.com/podcast/smoke-signals-podcasts--2745752>

*All six Tribal council candidates were invited to the Smoke Signals podcast but this year one candidate decided to direct their campaign efforts elsewhere.

For more information, contact Kamiah Koch at 503-879-1461 or kamiah.koch@grandronde.org



VISIT SMOKESIGNALS.ORG AND CLICK ON PODCAST

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 August 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

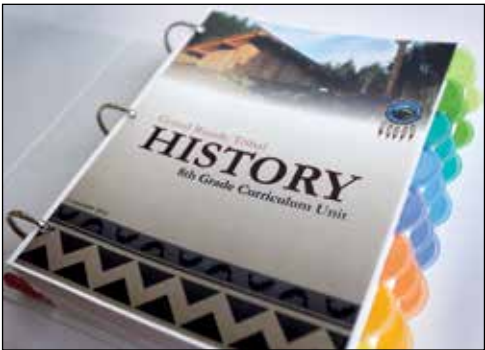
- **Ceremonial Hunting Board** meets as needed. Chair: Marline Groshong.
- **Culture Committee** meets as needed at the Veterans House. Chair: Molly Leno.
- **Editorial Board** meets monthly. The next meeting will be held via Zoom at 10 a.m. Monday, Aug. 24. Chair: Mia Prickett. Contact Editorial.Board@grandronde.org 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 Tribe’s 477 Employment and Training Program was nominated by the Northwest Region Bureau of Indian Affairs Workforce Development Division for a specialist award. The award recognized 477 programs established by various Tribes across Oregon, Washington and Idaho and was the first time Grand Ronde’s program had been nominated.

2016 — After two years of developing materials for it, the Tribe’s eighth-grade Tribal history curriculum was released to the public and shared with Oregon schools. The curriculum consisted of 17 lessons that provided information about the Tribe’s history, including time before Termination, Restoration, Tribal sovereignty, the Tribe’s Trail of Tears, Tribal laws and treaties, the Tribal court system, Tribal language, basketry, the achaf-hammi plankhouse and Canoe Family.



2016 File photo

2011 — The Tribe flew its flags at half-mast in honor of the life of U.S. Sen. Mark Hatfield. Hatfield, along with U.S. Rep. Les AuCoin, introduced legislation that restored the Tribe to federal recognition. Later, they brought forward legislation to establish the Grand Ronde Reservation Act, which returned 9,811 acres of original reservation land to the Tribe. “For the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Sen. Mark Hatfield valiantly and steadfastly supported our Tribal Restoration from beginning to end,” Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said. “There was no question in the senator’s mind that Termination was a grave injustice that needed to be corrected.”

2006 — Tribal Council approved the implementation of the Veterans Disability Compensation program. The program provided supplemental income to disabled veterans ages 18-54 who were determined to have become disabled during active duty. Veterans also needed to be receiving compensation from the Veterans Administration and fall within Tribal income guidelines to qualify. Veteran Tribal Elders who were 55 or older did not qualify due to already receiving Elder’s Pension or Elder SSI/SSD.

2001 — The Tribe established an appeals court and encouraged lawyers, non-lawyers and all Tribal members to visit and use the court. Tribal Court spent several months studying appellate rules used by other Oregon Tribes, the Oregon Rules of Appellate Procedure and federal appellate rules to determine which rules would best serve the Tribe. The court did not adopt any rules that referenced admiralty or maritime claims, jury trials, class actions, shareholder lawsuits or court-appointed experts.

1996 — The Tribe was in the process of developing 11 acres of land across from the Tribal cemetery into a manufactured housing park. The park would contain 37 housing lots, with lots leased to Tribal members who would then purchase their own manufactured homes to place within the park. During development of the site, the Tribe discovered 1.3 acres of wetlands, requiring the Tribe to apply for a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build on the wetlands.

1991 — New procedures and criteria for adults and minors seeking enrollment in the Tribe were established. In addition to possessing at least 1/16 blood quantum of Indian blood and providing documentation proving descendancy from a Tribal member, applicants needed to demonstrate “close economic and social ties to the Grand Ronde Tribe,” by actively attending Tribal functions and gatherings. These changes were set to take effect Jan. 1, 1994.

1986 — The Tribe held its second annual powwow. The powwow committee raised at least \$944.29 in funds. Raffle prizes included a Pendleton blanket, kachina dolls, a 10-inch black-and-white TV, a wall clock, wall hangings, shawls and an upholstered wingback chair. All raffle tickets cost \$1.

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

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. ■



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.

Graduates!



Stella Madden gets a hug from Shawash ili?i Skul Lead Aftercare Educator Cassie Moore as Madden graduates during the school’s graduation at achaf-hammi Thursday, Aug. 6.

Shawash ili?i Skul graduates dance after their graduation ceremony at achaf-hammi Thursday, Aug. 6.



Tribal member Josiah Sabey heads back to his seat after being recognized and collecting his gifts during the Shawash ili?i Skul graduation at achaf-hammi, the Tribal plankhouse, Thursday, Aug. 6. Nineteen students graduated from the Chinuk Wawa immersion school.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo



TRIBAL COMMITTEE / BOARD & COMMISSION

Now accepting new applications

- 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?

Current vacancies:

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

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

Applications available online at:
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.

Council extends additional gas discount for Tribal members

Tribal Council has extended a \$1.50 total per gallon gas discount for all Tribal members at Grand Ronde Station (the Tribal gas station at Spirit Mountain Casino) through Monday, Sept. 7, to help ease the financial burden caused by high gas prices.

Previously, Tribal members received a 30-cent per gallon discount at the Tribal gas station.

Grand Ronde Station is located at 26820 SW Salmon River Highway. Tribal members must show a Tribal identification card to receive the discount. ■



It's never too late to heal from addiction.

Have a courageous spirit. Reach out now, for you and your children.

Council approves agreement for tumwata village

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved a professional services agreement with Maul Foster & Alongi of Portland for design and engineering services for the next phase of development at the Tribe’s tumwata village project in Oregon City.

The agreement was approved at the Wednesday, July 29, council meeting.

“As a reminder, we came to you all in April in a work session to discuss the IGA (intergovernmental agreement) with Oregon City that described really how our organizations were going to work together to deliver this next phase of the riverwalk,” Tribal Community Development Department Manager Kristen Svicarovich said at a Tuesday, July 28, Legislative Action Committee meeting. “So, we’re really excited about getting this next body of work underway and onboarding a consultant team. This PSA is to start using funding from the \$12.5 million allocated by Oregon State Parks and intended for use for the bulk of design and construction of riverwalk block two.”

She explained the riverwalk was situated along the Willamette River at tumwata village and the first block of the project is where a groundbreaking took place earlier this year, and this will be the next block adjacent to that location.

The Tribe purchased the tumwata village property, formerly known as the Blue Heron Paper Mill, in 2019 and has spent several years demolishing unsafe buildings and removing contaminants and items, including buried railway tanker cars and fuel tanks from the site.

In other news, Tribal Council:

- Approved an application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

for its Preventing Youth Overdose: Treatment, Recovery, Education, Awareness and Training grant for up to \$1.35 million. If awarded, these funds would be used to prevent fatal and non-fatal overdoses among Tribal youth and young adults by increasing access to evidence-based prevention, screening, treatment and recovery services;

- Approved an application to the Health Resources and Services Administration for its Transforming Pediatrics for Early Childhood Programs grant for up to \$950,000. If awarded, the Health & Wellness Department will use these funds to embed three early childhood development specialists (a contracted pediatrician, pediatric dentist and child therapist) into the Tribe’s pediatric practice;
- Approved an application to the Oregon Health Authority Rural Health Transformation Program Tribal Initiative for up to \$2.4 million. If approved, the funds would be used to establish a culturally integrated assisted living and memory care facility, establish recruitment and retention mechanisms to sustain long-term care of Tribal members and expand withdrawal management services at Great Circle Recovery;
- Approved a credit card authorization of up to \$2,500 for Interim Audit Director Fuseini Alhassan;
- Approved Assistant Controller Julie Lindsey as an authorized signer on the Tribe’s bank, sweep and investment accounts, as well as its line of credit with TriState Capital Bank;
- Approved an application to SAMHSA for its Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant for up to \$500,000. If awarded, funds would be used for a fully

integrated, closed-loop infant and early childhood mental health system across the Behavioral Health Department and Cedar Circle Home Visiting;

- Approved an application to the SAMHSA Circles of Care for American Indians/Alaska Natives grant for up to \$350,000. If awarded, these funds would be used for the Tribe’s youth lush lamastin, or “Good Medicine” initiative;
- Approved an application to SAMHSA for its Treatment, Recovery and Workforce Support grant for up to \$2.5 million. If approved, funds would be used for launching the Substance Treatment and Employment Pathways Project. This project’s overall goal would be to increase recovery stability, workforce readiness and employment participation among individuals with substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders served through Great Circle

Recovery and Main Street Recovery;

- Approved an application to the Willamette Health Council’s Oregon Health Authority Rural Health Transformation Program for up to \$585,000. If awarded, funds would support a partnership between the Tribe’s Emergency Services Department and Polk County Fire District No. 1, co-leading the Polk County Community Paramedicine Consortium;
 - And approved enrolling three infants, 16 non-infants and one emergency non-infant into the Tribe because they meet the enrollment requirements in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance. Total enrollment counts in 2026 include 75 infants, 10 non-infant emergency enrollments and 111 non-infants.
- To watch the entire meeting, visit www.grandronde.org and click on the Videos tab. ■

General Welfare Assistance and Supplemental General Welfare Assistance Programs Ordinance open for comment

Tribal Council is considering amendments to the General Welfare Assistance and Supplemental General Welfare Assistance Programs Ordinance. The proposed new ordinance was given a first reading at the July 15, 2026, Tribal Council meeting.

The primary purpose of the proposed ordinance is to provide a death benefit to beneficiaries of Tribal members who were alive during a General Welfare Assistance Payment period.

Tribal Council invites comment on the proposed amendments to the General Welfare Assistance and Supplemental General Welfare Assistance Programs Ordinance. For a copy of the proposed amendments, contact the Tribal Attorney’s Office at 503-879-4664 or legal@grandronde.org. Comments can also be sent 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 Aug. 31, 2026. ■

BACK TO SCHOOL CLOTHES

Kick Off The School Year With New Fits!

Applications are now available for school clothes!

- This is a first come, first serve program
- Child must be enrolled in CTGR
- Child must be of school age and registered in school
- Must meet income requirements

APPLICATIONS CAN BE FOUND ON GRANDRONDE.ORG OR BY CALLING SOCIAL SERVICES AT (503) 879-2034

Completed applications can be emailed to ssdinfo@grandronde.org or dropped off in the Social Services Department at the Community Center Building

Hosted by the YEP Program

VOLLEYBALL FUNDAMENTALS & SKILLS CAMP

Coached by: Tribal Member & D1 College Athlete Caitlin Zimbrick & long time Volleyball coach Carrie Zimbrick

AUGUST 17TH & 18TH

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Tribal Gym

Who Can Join

- Incoming 5th-9th Graders (2026-2027 School Year).
- All skill levels welcome
- Bring water bottle & athletic attire, court appropriate athletic shoes.

Overview: This two-day camp is designed to build strong foundational volleyball skills while improving overall athletic movement. Athletes will receive hands-on coaching, structured drills, and individual feedback to help them grow in both skill and confidence.

Please use link to sign up for clinic. If you have any questions you can email yep@grandronde.org

Redevelopment of the site represents an opportunity to heal

VILLAGE continued
from front page

ceremony marked the beginning of phase one development for the project.

In a Thursday, July 30, press release, the Tribe and Oregon City announced they had selected Maul Foster & Alongi as the lead design consultant for the riverwalk at tumwata village. The firm was chosen for its “multidisciplinary team, its experience with complex permitting and its work on culturally informed design.”

The firm will begin detailed design, engineering and permitting work for the next segment of the riverfront.

Funded by \$12.5 million in Oregon State Parks dollars provided through revenue from the Oregon Lottery, design work during this phase will focus on advancing the design of riverfront alignments and public access areas, supporting ecological restoration and habitat improvements and preparing construction-ready documents for future build-out.

For the Tribe, redevelopment of the site represents an opportunity to heal both the land and local ecosystem.

“For generations, we have been caretakers of this land and have welcomed many to this sacred place,” Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said in the press release. “That cultural practice also drives this next phase at tumwata — bringing life back to



Contributed graphic

Phase one of tumwata village is currently under construction in Oregon City. According to Tribal Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb, this stage lays the groundwork for long-term public access, cultural interpretation and community-serving development at Willamette Falls.

the landscape and providing public access; we will be able to share this special place with our families, neighbors and guests.”

She continued, “We are grateful that Oregon City shares this vision with us and is eager to take this next step with us.”

Tribal Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb provided an update on the project’s current construction progress.

tumwata village is currently in phase one infrastructure delivery, with active weekly on site construction coordination underway. According to Webb, the work is primarily focused on block one, a designated area at the northern

end of the site.

“Phase one work on block one is expected to be completed in the summer of 2027, he said. “Work on block two with MFA is scheduled to begin this month, with 30% design expected by the end of December 2026.”

Design work is planned to proceed alongside phase one construction as the project moves into the next steps for the riverwalk and site improvements.

Since early summer, Webb said the project has reached several milestones, including:

- Establishing weekly on site construction meetings;
- Completing rock blasting to allow installation of the sanitary sewer

- main;
- Completing sanitary sewer work;
- Coordinating utilities with Portland General Electric and Northwest Natural.

Webb stated that the public can expect to see changes taking place in the area, including implementation of street and sidewalk construction, Americans with Disabilities Act accessible ramps, crosswalks, streetlights and utility installation consistent with Main Street, Third Street, Fourth Street and Railroad Avenue.

As development proceeds, the site continues to involve challenges, including archaeological monitoring in block one, utility coordination within a historic industrial setting and continued permit and plan reviews with the Oregon Department of Transportation and the city of Oregon City.

However, Webb said this phase of the project also provides opportunities for extending safe public access, advancing river-adjacent streets and paths and creating platforms for future and cultural economic development consistent with the master plan vision for the site.

“tumwata village is moving from planning into visible, sustained construction activity,” he said. “This stage lays the groundwork for long-term public access, cultural interpretation and community-serving development at the falls. We appreciate everyone’s patience and support as we build this place with care, honoring our stewardship responsibilities.” ■

Spirit Mountain Casino renovations underway with temporary restaurant site

By Alexander Bliven
Smoke Signals intern

The Mountain View Sports Bar at Spirit Mountain Casino has temporarily relocated to the former Happy Dragon restaurant space near the Rouge River room as renovations to modernize sections of the casino continue.

The sports bar closed in its previous location Monday, July 27, and reopened in its temporary position on Thursday, July 30. The bar is expected to remain there until December when casino construction is expected to be completed.

Throughout renovations, the weekly Monday Elder dinner remains unaffected and continues to be held in the Rouge River room during its normal business hours.

In an email update sent to casino employees, Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez outlined several other changes within the casino as a result of renovations.

The Sportsbook opened in a new temporary location near the relocated sports bar Wednesday, July 22.

10 Barrel Hop Yard permanently closed at the end of business Sunday, July 26.

The Rogue River room tempo-

rarily operated as a buffet-style dining venue while final preparations were completed to relocate the sports bar.

Additionally, Spirit Mountain Casino CEO Camille Mercier said that entry gaming is scheduled for completion Tuesday, Oct. 27.

“All temporary amenities are now in operation, with the same operating hours for the Sportsbook and the sports bar as before,” she said. “Menu choices remain the same in the temporary sports bar. Drawings and other marketing activities previously done in The Peak will now take place on the active gaming floor. No other normal operation services are expected to be impacted.”

During the Tuesday, July 28, Legislative Action Committee meeting, Tribal Council and Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. Board of Directors member Kathleen George said construction of the project’s structural components was already underway and ahead of schedule.

“Barring any unforeseen problems, they expect to get done a little ahead of schedule before Christmas,” George said. “And so that’s the goal and right now, that looks good.” ■

An illustration of a human head in profile, facing left. Inside the head, there is a stylized landscape with a blue sky, white clouds, green hills, and a small orange structure. A large, colorful plant with pink, orange, and green leaves grows out of the top of the head. The background is a light blue gradient.

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Youth grantmakers celebrate fifth year of giving to local nonprofits

By Alexander Bliven

Smoke Signals intern

Five years into a program designed to teach Tribal youth about philanthropy, grantmaking and community service, the Spirit Mountain Community Fund celebrated its Youth Grantmaking check presentation Friday, Aug. 7, with a luncheon and awarded \$5,000 checks to five organizations selected by the summer youth interns.

As part of the program, the interns research organizations, learn about their work and select the nonprofits they want to support before awarding each with a grant.

Grantees representing the organizations were also gifted beaded necklaces by the interns.

The event was attended by Tribal Council and Community Fund Board of Trustees members Lisa Leno and Matthew Haller, Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George, Board of Trustees member Maria Rojo de Steffey, Board Chairman Trevor Aaron and Community Fund staff.

Community Fund Director Angie Sears welcomed attendees and thanked the organizations for their work in their communities.

“Our check presentations are a way for us to connect with our grantees,” Sears said. “It allows us to recognize and celebrate each of you for the incredible work that you do; providing much needed support and services for some of our most vulnerable communities. We are honored and blessed for the partnerships that we’ve created with you and we’re so thankful for you all.”



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Spirit Mountain Community Fund youth intern Billy DeLoe trims a blackberry bush during the Community Fund's site visit and volunteer opportunity at Parrott Creek in Oregon City last month. During the visit, the interns learned about Parrott Creek's cultural ecology project. Each summer the Community Fund's youth interns are taught about philanthropy, grantmaking and community service.



Laura Perez, left, Simply Birthdays co-founder, shakes hands with Spirit Mountain Community Fund youth intern Cheyenne Haller as Perez is presented a check during the 2026 Youth Grantmaking check presentation at Spirit Mountain Casino's Event Center Friday, Aug. 7.

Sears also praised interns Billy DeLoe and Cheyenne Haller for the dedication they brought to the program and said they were eager to meet representatives of the organizations they selected, learn more about their work and volunteer whenever possible.

During the presentation, DeLoe and Haller expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the program and for the people they worked with throughout their internships.

“I’ve done a couple internships now as a youth and this one will definitely be the most memorable,” Haller said.

The interns then explained why they selected each organization.

DeLoe and Haller also raffled off a Tri-logged blanket to one of the organizations present. The blanket was created to commemorate the Community Fund reaching

\$100 million in total giving in December 2024. The Community Fund worked with the Tribe’s Digital Communications Manager Matthew Williams to design the blanket.

DeLoe explained the significance of gifting a blanket.

“In Native American culture, gifting a blanket holds deep significance as a symbol of protection and community support,” DeLoe said. “It represents a gesture of respect and is often a way to celebrate a significant achievement or to acknowledge someone’s contribution to the community.”

The blanket was won by Elakha Alliance.

Interns DeLoe and Haller chose the following organizations to receive awards:

- Oregon Attorney General’s Sexual Assault Task Force, a nonprofit in Keizer with the goal of responding to and reducing sexual violence towards adults and adolescents while improving community response and support for victims of sexual assault;
- Elakha Alliance, a nonprofit based in Siletz dedicated to “strengthening Oregon’s marine and coastal ecosystems and communities by working to restore a thriving population of sea otters along the Oregon coast;”
- Grand Sherimina Food Bank, a nonprofit community charity based in Sheridan that provides food boxes and assistance to those facing food insecurity;
- Simply Birthdays, a nonprofit organization in Salem that provides birthday parties and celebrations to children living in local homeless shelters;
- Yamhill County Action Program, a social services program based in Yamhill County with programs including housing, food and energy assistance that are designed to “help improve the lives of low-income people and strengthen communities.” ■

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Tribal delegation lobbies in Washington, D.C.

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Siuslaw National Forest has gone essentially untended for some 40 years, Tribal Council member Pete Wakeland said. Now, the Tribe is seeking a congressional bill to transfer 18,628 acres to the Tribe, which plans to reinvigorate the forest with the same management style that has made its own reservation forest a hallmark of sustainability.

The Tribe has secured support from Yamhill, Tillamook and Polk counties, and last week, Wakeland and Tribal Council member Toby McClary traveled to Washington, D.C. along with Tribal Attorney Kim D'Aquila, to talk with the state's congressional members about the transfer, along with the nationwide Tribal concern about off-reservation gaming.

"You've got all these acres that are just stagnant," Wakeland said. "It's single structure forest. It's dense; it doesn't provide great habitat. The roads haven't been maintained. If the Tribe gets this land, we can manage it. We can create better habitat, better transportation up there; overall, it's going to be a benefit; not a detriment. Grand Ronde has the capacity to do this. We've got a great Natural Resources forestry staff; we can actually do this."

The trip came up suddenly, McClary said, because the Tribe had for some time been seeking a meeting with Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Billy Kirkland, who reached out with a suggested



Toby McClary

meeting date to discuss off-reservation gaming. "We wanted to meet with him and his staff regarding upcoming strategies as it relates to Indian gaming," McClary said. "It really was about trying to get a read on the newly appointed assistant secretary's position on off-reservation gaming and to try and understand where his office is headed as it relates to that."

The growing trend toward off-reservation gaming has caused alarm among Tribes across the country, who say it could lead to a loss of sovereignty.

"Unfortunately, we didn't really get that," McClary said. "It's a very controversial topic and I think that the assistant secretary realizes that ... it seemed as if there is a lot of work to be done for his office, and they are working through that currently."

Nonetheless, McClary said, "I always feel great coming home from Washington, D.C. It's not always responsive or the answers we were hoping for, but it is meaningful and building the relationship with our congressional delegates is something I feel is important. ... those are some of the most important relationships we can have in terms of strengthening and building our sovereignty."



Pete Wakeland

While the group was there, they took advantage of the opportunity to meet with staff working for Oregon's senators and representatives to talk about the proposed Siuslaw Forest land transfer. Wakeland, who arrived a day earlier than McClary, also took the opportunity to discuss a proposed bill expanding the ability for some southwest Washington Tribes to kill sea lions.

The Tribe is hoping Sen. Jeff Merkley will introduce the land transfer bill before Congress adjourns for its August recess, Wakeland and McClary said, and came away encouraged about the possibility.

The Tribe would like to get the bill before a hearing in September or October, Wakeland said.

"There was no real opposition to it," he said. "The only concern we've heard is that needed to remain open to the public and it would be, just like the reservation is; anyone can go up there."

Wakeland noted that the Tribe has spent decades improving the forestland on the reservation and expanding habitat for wildlife. In addition, he said, it has been able to expand spawning habitat for salmon, in part by replacing culverts that were blocking fish passage. He said he expects the Tribe will simi-

larly improve habitat and diversity in the Siuslaw National Forest. The Tribe's statement on the transfer says that under its management, "these lands can become a healthy working forest for fish and wildlife, timber, fire resilience and recreation for all Oregonians."

However, Wakeland said, the Tribe does not support a bill to expand the ability of southwest Washington Tribes to kill sea lions and other mammals in the Columbia River. House Resolution 9621 would expand the ability to use lethal means against sea lions to include harbor seals and expand the area in which they may be killed. Some advocates argue that salmon are primarily endangered by ocean and river conditions and by dams impeding their spawning grounds.

Wakeland said that current measures are working and the measure isn't needed.

"What's strange to me is that they're putting this forward and it doesn't include any Oregon Tribes," he said. "And what happens on the Columbia River impacts what happens at Willamette Falls, which in turn impacts what happens on our reservation, because a certain percentage of fish that come over the falls come up into our reservation, and that concerns us. Our hope really at this point is that this thing doesn't go anywhere. ... The Tribe works with ODFW and it's working. So, (the bill) doesn't need to move further and if it does look like it's going to go further, there needs to be some bugs worked out." ■

Tribe has no local staffing shortages

**FIRES continued
from front page**

forestlands, he said, to try to prevent dispersed camping, although it is still allowing camping at designated campsites.

Puerini said the Tribe still maintains several pieces of fire equipment on the reservation, along with 15 staff, to conduct weekend patrols and fight any fires that might break out locally.

During a thunderstorm the last week of July, he said, "There were hundreds of lightning strikes," that resulted in some 15 relatively small fires. Two of those were on the reservation but were found only later after they had burned themselves out," he said.

At the Tuesday, Aug. 11, Legislative Action Committee meeting, Langley announced that Tribal Council and the Natural Resources Department were able to donate \$5,000 worth of water and food to the Warm Springs Tribe. He also noted that Bishop had gone over to Warm Springs to help with emergency response efforts there.

Tribal member Amber Case-Eastman of Red Road Cleaning LLC and Tribal member Stephanie Craig of Rooted Ways announced on social media recently that they are collecting donations of traditional

medicinal plants for "our Native brothers and sisters who lost theirs because of the fires."

"We are accepting sage, cedar bundles, sweetgrass, tobacco, lavender, calendula, juniper, pine pitch and other prayer medicines ... call 503-793-2037 to arrange a drop-off or pickup," they wrote. "From Grand Ronde with love, may our relatives feel the strength of community surrounding them."

Sovereignty Bites, a Tribal member owned business, announced that it is donating 15% of its meal prep sales to wildfire relief efforts "with a focus on supporting displaced community members in Warm Springs, and as funds allow, other affected communities."

To learn more, visit www.sovereigntybites.com.

Initial fire response

At the Wednesday, July 29, Tribal Council meeting, Bishop told council that "I have been in contact with each (Tribal emergency manager) to let them know that we are in support of helping them with whatever they may need," she said. "As of now, they have not requested anything from us but they are using state and federal resources... Warm Springs says that they may need something come recovery time but we will wait and see on that."

Langley also provided updated

information at the council meeting.

"I spoke with Andrew Puerini and he said that he reached out to Warm Springs and offered our hand crew," he said. "They're up near Detroit (Lake) right now and they would be able to assist Aug. 4, but he hasn't heard back from Warm Springs yet. In addition to that, we have crews near Vale, with three engines there. We have one engine and a hand crew near the Middle Fork Fire, which is in the Eugene area, and then in Wenatchee and Spokane, Washington, we have one engine there. We have 52 personnel out on the fires currently and we still have our three engines and 11 staff here locally to address needs, should they arise."

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs issued an emergency declaration, following the Bench Fire that has burned six homes and other structures. Evacuations remain in place, Bishop said, and the Tribe is considering pursuing a presidential disaster declaration.

The Burns Paiute Tribe has also issued an emergency declaration, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation has been affected by the Hagan Fire burning on reservation lands and surrounding communities.

The Oregonian newspaper reported that 76 large fires have burned in Oregon so far this year and 35 of

those are still active.

The Tribe's Emergency Services Department has been sending help, Bishop said, with 10 personnel and two fire engines to help with the statewide wildfire response at Warm Springs and other locations.

"Despite these deployments, CTGR has not experienced local staffing shortages," she said. "Full emergency management coverage has been maintained through state-reimbursed overtime and part-time staffing, allowing CTGR to continue supporting statewide wildfire response while remaining fully prepared to protect the Grand Ronde community."

She said she remains in contact "with the Emergency Managers from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Burns Paiute Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. I have conveyed that the CTGR Tribal Council sends its thoughts and prayers to their communities and that CTGR stands ready to provide assistance if requested through the appropriate resource request process. I also remain in close coordination with the Oregon Department of Emergency Management Tribal liaison." ■

*Smoke Signals Editor
Danielle Harrison
contributed to this story.*

Pacific Northwest Tribes partici



Tribal member Kaikanim Mercier introduces himself and asks for permission for the Grand Ronde Canoe Family to come ashore as they land during the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey at Sequelitchew Creek in DuPont, Wash., Friday, July 31.

By Nicole Montesano
Smoke Signals staff writer

DUPONT, WASH. — Members from dozens of Pacific Northwest Tribes and beyond, including Grand Ronde, gathered on Friday, July 31, to watch and wait for the arrival of the canoes participating in the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey.

Those who wanted to see the canoes arrive at the rocky shoreline along Puget Sound had to walk down a 1.5-mile forest path to the water. The walk was punctuated by calls to step aside as gators drove by, loaded with chairs and passengers who needed an easier descent. Host Nisqually Indian Tribe had commissioned commemorative water bottles, emblazoned with this year’s journey logo and filled with water enriched with electrolytes, that were handed out to help keep watchers hydrated. A first-aid booth was stationed at the

end of the trail.

The 2026 Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Potlatch was an opportunity for more Tribes to participate in the Landing Day ceremony, after rough waters in 2025 led to many, including Grand Ronde, deciding to forgo their official landing out of safety concerns. Tribal peoples from as far away as Alaska, Canada and Hawaii participated, with 75 canoe families registered to participate. Some, including Grand Ronde, had been pulling for days.

The Nisqually Tribe’s website noted that “The Canoe Journey has grown to include over 100 canoes and the participation of canoe families from other Native canoe cultures, including Native American Tribes, First Nations peoples, Alaska Natives, Inuit, Maori, Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous peoples from across the world.”

Landing Day arrived sunny and warm. Canoes were scheduled to

begin arriving at noon, but the tide “was just really pumping through there,” Tribal member Andrew Freeman said. “There was no way you could fight that. ... they were like holding still and paddling at full speed.”

Some canoes pulled over to wait until the tide subsided, others kept paddling.

“I’m assuming that came into play, but what I’ve realized is you have a plan and you try to stick to it, but it’s really just whenever you get there it’s meant to be,” he said.

While the crowd waited, curious seals bobbed in the waves and a flock of Canada geese grazed a nearby wetland. Small children splashed in the shallows of Puget Sound, while adults sought shelter from the sun in tents and the scattering of trees above the shoreline. A drone flew above the water and police patrolled the area.

When the first canoes appeared near the Sequelitchew Creek landing site at 2 p.m., their occupants paddling hard down the length of the bay from Solo Point before



The Grand Ronde Canoe Family pull in chicha, le Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey at Sequelitchew C

circling in respect before the assembled people, they were welcomed with singing and drumming.

Members of the Nisqually Royalty, Elders and Tribal members took turns speaking to the arriving canoes, welcoming them to the homelands of the People of the River, People of the Grass. As the afternoon wore on, canoes began lining up across the bay, waiting their turn to speak with the Tribe.

Pullers from the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde made their landing at 5:30 p.m., tired and hot after a day spent on the water, but singing as they arrived, rowing alongside Suquamish-based Tana Stobs Canoe Family. Grand Ronde landed two canoes this year; stan-kiya (coyote) and chicha (grandma).

Freeman said the pullers had gone approximately 29 miles the previous day and 25 miles on Landing Day.

After formally asking and receiving permission to come ashore, the canoes returned to Solo Point to disembark.

Tribal member Mary Lopez, an assistant teacher for 4 and 5-year-olds at the Shawash-ili?i Skul, watched from the shore.

“I’ve been part of the Grand Ronde canoe family, since I was a youth myself,” she said. “I’m now



Tribal member Malia Blanchard puts a vest on her three-month-old son, Tribal member Shikoba Campbell, as they prepare for the Grand Ronde Canoe Family’s protocol of the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey hosted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe in Washington, Sunday, Aug. 2.



The Grand Ronde Canoe Family drums and sings during their protocol of the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey hosted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe in Washington, Sunday, Aug. 2.

pate in the Paddle to Nisqually



ft, and stankiya during Landing Day of the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek
reek in DuPont, Wash., Friday, July 31.



Tribal member Mabel Brisbois dances during the Grand Ronde Canoe
Family's protocol of the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek Potlatch 2026
Canoe Journey hosted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe in Washington, Sunday,
Aug. 2.

34 years old. It makes my heart full seeing our youth on the canoe, speaking in our language like that, asking permission to come on the shore. I hope to take what I've seen here, the feelings I get, home to my family and our community."

Her boss was on one of the canoes, Lopez said, but added, "I feel like they're all my family members."

The week-long journey led Grand Ronde pullers through stretches of the Willamette and Columbia rivers, from Newberg to Champoege, where they camped overnight before rowing onward. The trip included a stop at Rooster Rock and at Chinook Landing Marine Park in Fairview, before they traveled to Washington.

Freeman staffed one of the support boats while his wife Brittany pulled a trailer. Their son Isaac, 11, was one of this year's pullers, while 9-year-old Kaylee, Riley, 14, and Cloey, 16, went along for the experience.

Freeman said he asked each of

them about their favorite part of the trip. Kaylee's was the gang of raccoons that raided the family's supplies at Champoege, he said.

"Chloe said she loved seeing the new areas and the beautiful scenery. It was our first time on Puget Sound," he said. "Riley, her favorite part was making new relationships and meeting new people."

Isaac was the only one that paddled and he said his favorite part of the journey was being mentally ready to put in work.

For Freeman, it was the entire experience.

"I didn't grow up in the culture, but at Suquamish, Isaac was drumming and singing; Riley was out dancing," he said. "One thing that was awesome in that moment; I was sitting there at the back and he's out there jamming out on a new drum that his aunt just gave him...I was just looking at everyone's faces; they were all smiling and it was a visual reflection of how I was feeling inside. Chloe

was sitting next to me. My wife and our youngest were sitting outside, hanging out with everyone else. It was my sister's birthday, so that was pretty awesome."

Spending time relaxing with others in the community, being welcomed into new Tribal spaces

and invited to feel at home there, and seeing the strong connections the Tribe has with other Tribal communities and meeting other artists stood out as special memories, Freeman added.

Next year, Landing Day will take place in Ketchikan, Alaska. ■

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Tribal member Tasina
Bluehorse dances during
the Grand Ronde Canoe
Family's protocol of
the Paddle to Nisqually
Medicine Creek Potlatch
2026 Canoe Journey
hosted by the Nisqually
Indian Tribe in Washington,
Sunday, Aug. 2.



Tribal member Sophia Morning-Star,
above, dances during the Grand
Ronde Canoe Family's protocol of
the Paddle to Nisqually Medicine
Creek Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey
hosted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe
in Washington, Sunday, Aug. 2.



Tribal member Alexis Contreras
dances during the Grand Ronde
Canoe Family's protocol of the
Paddle to Nisqually Medicine Creek
Potlatch 2026 Canoe Journey
hosted by the Nisqually Indian Tribe in
Washington, Sunday, Aug. 2.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Visitors to EAC asked to utilize parking lots, not streets

Tribal administration is requesting that non-Elder visitors to the Tribe’s Elders Activity Center utilize the parking lot across the street from the Adult Foster Care homes, as Blacktail Drive was not built to accommodate street parking.

“We have allowed street parking knowing that at some point this was going to need to be addressed because of how narrow the street becomes when cars park on one side of the roadway, which only allows for one car to pass through at a time,” Tribal Interim General Manager Bryan Langley said in an email. “With the increase in the numbers of residents and employees, the traffic in this area has also increased, making this area unsafe at times. Public Works will be reviewing this area to determine potential changes that will need to be made to allow cars to pass uninhibited and provide safe street parking, therefore we are asking that only Elders park on the south side of Blacktail Drive while visiting the Elders Activity Center.”

The Tribe is planning on doing some curb painting and placing additional signage to raise awareness regarding the changes. ■

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Tribe offering support to incarcerated members

Grand Ronde Tribal members who are incarcerated, have been recently released from prison or are involved in addiction treatment programs don’t have to face challenges alone.

The Tribe has a post-prison/post-treatment peer support specialist, Tribal member Joe Ulestad, who is also a certified recovery mentor.

“I want our members who are incarcerated or need help to know we haven’t forgotten about them and we’re here to help,” he said. “They can call me, email or text.”

Ulestad can be reached at joe.ulestad@grandronde.org, by text/call at 971-237-5262 or on office line, 503-879-1389. ■

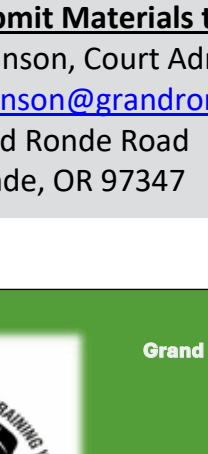


Request for Qualifications

The Tribe is seeking Requests for Qualifications from individuals interested in serving as the Chief Judge of the Tribal Court. This is a part-time, Tribal Council appointed position with a term of two years. To obtain a copy of the RFQ contact Shawn Branson at 503-879-4596 or email shawn.branson@grandronde.org.

Proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. on **Monday, September 1, 2026.**

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shawn.branson@grandronde.org
9615 Grand Ronde Road
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Employment Services
Center Room 118



Join us for a day of Cultural sharing, Activities, Program information, Food and Fun. Come share in the activities or just hang out and visit.

Beading	Crafting
Activities	Food

To RSVP
Contact Flicka Lucero
503-879-2165
Flicka.lucero@grandronde.org

	CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE OFFICIAL BALLOT TRIBAL COUNCIL ELECTION SEPTEMBER 12, 2026	
	TO VOTE: Complete the arrow ← pointing to your choice like this:	
CANDIDATES FOR TRIBAL COUNCIL	ADVISORY QUESTIONS QUESTION #1	
Vote For No More Than Three (3) DENISE HARVEY	Vote for No More Than One (1) What should be the Tribe's top housing priority moving forward? Housing for Elders, low-income members, and others with the greatest needs. Building a mix of income-based and market-rate housing. Expanding homeownership opportunities (e.g., down-payment help, rent-to-own). All priorities are equally important.	
VALERIA ATANACIO	QUESTION #2 Vote for No More Than One (1) What should be the Tribe's second-highest housing priority? Housing for Elders, low-income members, and others with the greatest needs. Building a mix of income-based and market-rate housing. Expanding homeownership opportunities (e.g., down-payment help, rent-to-own). None / No second priority.	
PAMALA WARREN-CHASE		
CHRISTOPHER BAILEY		
LISA MARLENE LENO		
MATTHEW HALLER		



GRAND RONDE POLICE LOG



Wednesday, July 1

- Officers responded to a possible domestic disturbance in the Tribal housing area.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with attempting to locate a vehicle crash in the area of Highway 18 and Hebo Road.
- Officers responded to a call about fireworks at Big Buck Campground.

Thursday, July 2

- A warrant arrest occurred at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a medical call in Tribal housing.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with checking on a disabled motorist near milepost 19 on Highway 18.

Friday, July 3

- Officers took a report of illegal dumping at the Big Buck Campground.
- Officers responded to the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway for a possible domestic violence situation. It ended with an arrest.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with attempting to locate the subject of a driving complaint near milepost 29 on Highway 18.

Saturday, July 4

- Officers responded to a disturbance at local restaurant. An outside agency handled the investigation.
- Possible illegal drugs were reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Officers responded to a fire at the recycling dumpster in Tribal housing. Fire personnel extinguished the fire.
- A possible disturbance was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Sunday, July 5

- A two-vehicle crash occurred on Highway 18 and Hebo Road.
- Possible trespassing and disorderly conduct were reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Monday, July 6

- Possible illegal dumping was reported at the recycling dumpster in Tribal Housing.
- Possible suspicious activity was reported in the parking area at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway. Individuals were transferring items between vehicles. No criminal activity was identified.

Tuesday, July 7

- A follow-up investigation of possible drug use at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway was conducted. Due to lack of evidence and insufficient probable cause, no search warrant or arrest was pursued.
- Found property was located at the 48000 block of Southwest Blacktail Drive.
- Officers responded to reports of possible burning wire at the 28000 block of Ackerson Road.
- Officers responded to a report of an individual stepping in front of vehicles near milepost 23 on Highway 18.

Wednesday, July 8

- Drug paraphernalia was found at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway. It was seized and destroyed.
- Citizen contact occurred near milepost 22 on Highway 18.

Thursday, July 9

- Officers assisted an outside agency near Highway 18 with an arrest for possession of a controlled substance.
- Officers responded to a report of a naked person throwing items into the roadway at the interchange of highways 18 and 22.
- Officers responded to the powwow grounds regarding two 911 hang up calls, where a person reportedly could be heard yelling that they were being chased. Officers checked the property and were unable to locate anyone.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a disturbance at the 47000 block of Hebo Road.
- Officers responded to a report of a motorcycle eluding an outside agency near milepost 32 on Highway 18.
- Officers responded to a 911 hang up call involving juveniles near the 51000 block of Hebo Road. Officers contacted them and spoke about the misuse of 911.
- Citizen contact occurred at the 53000 block of Southwest Sourgrass Road, which resulted with an arrest for an outstanding warrant and a citation on an outstanding warrant.

Friday, July 10

- A possible domestic disturbance was reported at the 9500 block of Raven Loop.

Saturday, July 11

- Officers assisted an outside agency with an intoxicated individual who reportedly crashed into nearby property and attempted to leave in the 300 block of Northwest Sixth Street in Willamina.
- Officers assisted a family removing their disabled vehicle from the side of the roadway near Grand Ronde Road and Highway 18.

Sunday, July 12

- A domestic disturbance was reported at the 9500 block of Raven Loop.

- Possible drug selling was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- A suspicious vehicle was reported circling Tribal campus near the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road. It was not located.
- Officers responded to the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway for a vehicle doing burnouts. The vehicle left prior to officers' arrival. It was later located and the driver was arrested for DUII by an outside agency.

Monday, July 13

- A follow-up regarding an ongoing investigation occurred at the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- A driving complaint was reported near milepost 36 on Highway 18.
- Found property was reported at the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road consisting of several identification cards.
- A requested civil standby was reported near the 47000 block of Hebo Road.

Tuesday, July 14

- Officers assisted an outside agency with a reported DUII crash near the 200 block of Southeast Lamson Street in Willamina.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with attempted civil service near the 9400 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Officers assisted with a resident locked out at the 25000 block of Southwest Coyote Court.
- Officers received a report of an attempted telephone scam where the caller spoofed the police department's phone number and falsely claimed the victim had missed jury duty, had a warrant and owed \$125,000.
- Officers responded to a confrontation at the powwow grounds.

Wednesday, July 15

- Trespassing was reported at Tribal property near the 3500 block of Aldercrest Road in Tillamook.
- A domestic disturbance was reported at the 28000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Thursday, July 16

- A domestic disturbance was reported at the 26000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Officers reported to an apparently abandoned vehicle at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Friday, July 17

- A suspicious vehicle was reported near the Grand Ronde Library.
- Officers responded regarding a loose dog near the 9600 block of Raven Loop.
- Officers removed hay that was blocking a lane near milepost 23 on Highway 18.
- Possible animal abuse was reported near the 9600 block of Tillixam Circle.
- A family disturbance was reported at the 28000 block of McPherson Road.

Saturday, July 18

- A false alarm was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Drugs were found at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a disturbance near the 100 block of Hill Drive.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a domestic violence investigation near Southwest Frys Lane and Ballston Road.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a reported sexual assault near the 500 block of Yamhill Street in Sheridan.

Sunday, July 19

- Officers assisted an outside agency with a warrant arrest near the 200 block of Northeast D Street in Willamina.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a reported burglary near the 38000 block of Tenbush Lane in Willamina.
- A possible suicidal individual was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Monday, July 20

- Officers assisted an outside agency with a domestic disturbance near the 48000 block of Hebo Road.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with service of civil paperwork near the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Citizen contact occurred near milepost 26 on Highway 18. Officers provided the person with a ride due to their vehicle being broken down.
- A driving complaint was reported near milepost 3 on Highway 18.

Tuesday, July 21

- A driving complaint was reported near milepost 19 on Highway 18.
- A driving complaint was reported near milepost 22 on Highway 18.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a domestic disturbance near the 900 block of Southeast Sheridan Road.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a single car crash near mile-

See POLICE LOG

continued on page 15

Tribe increases conservation properties to more than 2,900 acres

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals editor

As of Thursday, Aug. 6, the Tribe is owner of the Jordan Valley property outside of Scio. The conservation property is 336.15 acres and was purchased through the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program with external funding, bringing the total to more than 2,990 acres of conservation land in Oregon.

The Tribe has acquired the acres for its conservation properties during the past 14 years in Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Lane and Linn counties. The acquisition of the Jordan Valley property is 100% externally funded and includes stewardship funding for ongoing management.

According to its website, the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program is a partnership between the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Bonneville Power Administration to protect wildlife habitat in the Willamette River Basin. The main goal of the program is to offset the effects of federal flood control and hydroelectric facilities on wildlife, particularly those affected by the Willamette River Basin Flood Control Projects.

In 2010, BPA signed a settlement agreement with the



Contributed photo

As of Thursday, Aug. 6, the Tribe is owner of the Jordan Valley property outside of Scio. The conservation property is 336.15 acres.

ODFW to mitigate hydropower construction and operational impacts to wildlife. As part of that agreement, ODFW manages and BPA funds the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program through 2026, allowing entities such as the Tribe to acquire properties for fish and wildlife that includes a conservation easement.

Tribal Economic & Lands Director Jan Looking Wolf Reibach thanked various departments and Tribal Council for securing the acquisition.

“Hayu-masi (hands raised) for your leadership, vision and support in the recovery and management of our homelands,” he said in an email. “There is no organization more connected to these properties than the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, we are the first caretakers since time immemorial. Congratulations and gratitude to our teams in Natural Resources, Lands, Tribal Attorney’s Office and our support areas for yet another externally funded conservation property coming home to Tribal ownership.”

He noted that two other conservation property acquisitions were in progress with anticipated closing dates in 2027.

Tribal Fish & Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen said, “Great job team. Another amazing acquisition and a great property to add to the conservation portfolio.”

According to Reibach, the property is located within the boundary of the Anson Dart 1852 Santiam Kalapuya Reservation. It includes oak woodland, wetland/prairie and mixed forest habitats. The southern half consists of open flatlands at the bottom of the valley draining Jordan Creek and its tributaries. There are year-round springs and emergent wetlands in the southwest corner.

The habitat also includes diverse native plant and wildlife species such as the chipping sparrow,

purple martin, western gray squirrel, acorn woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon, western meadowlark, warbling vireo and western wood-pewee. The property also includes a water right for irrigation as well as a surface water right to use Feidler Creek and an unnamed stream.

Conservation properties owned by the Tribe include the following:

- Rattlesnake Butte – 96.98 acres, acquired Sept. 2012
- Rattlesnake Butte 3 – 172.47 acres, acquired May 2015
- Chahalpam – 348.11 acres, acquired May 2013
- Chahalpam 2 – 91.44 acres, acquired Jan 2015
- Chahalpam 3 – 30.86 acres, acquired March 2018
- Chankawan - 425.71 acres, acquired May 2016
- Noble Oaks – 667.5 acres, acquired June 2019
- Ahsney – 61.85 acres, acquired Dec. 2019
- Takilth – 108.12 acres, acquired May 2021
- Enchanted Oaks – 462.8 acres, acquired Feb. 2022
- Deer Path East – 57.68 acres, reimbursed Sept. 2024
- Deer Path West – 55.46 acres, acquired May 2025
- Kanawi – 75.3 acres – acquired Dec 2025
- Jordan Valley – 336.15 acres – acquired Aug 2026 ■



GRAND RONDE POLICE LOG



POLICE LOG

continued from page 14

post 14 on Highway 22.

- Fraud was reported at the 9100 block of Arrow Wood Drive.

Wednesday, July 22

- Possible drug activity was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway. A police K-9 alerted on a vehicle, which resulted in seizure of approximately eight grams of meth and other drug paraphernalia.
- Two suspects were arrested at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway due to court order violations.
- A welfare check occurred at the 100 block of Wind River Drive.

Thursday, July 23

- Fraud was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Possible theft was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a burglar alarm near the 22700 block of Highway 18B.
- Drugs were reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- A minor vehicle crash was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Friday, July 24

- An arrest for domestic violence occurred near the 200 block of Ead Creek Loop.
- A welfare check was requested at the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- A previously trespassed individual was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway and left with no issues.

Saturday, July 25

- A domestic disturbance was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- A driving complaint was reported near milepost 26 on Highway 18.

Sunday, July 26

- A traffic stop occurred near milepost 22 on Highway 18, which resulted in multiple traffic violations.
- Theft was reported at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Monday, July 27

- No calls

Tuesday, July 28

- Officers responded to a report of racial slurs being yelled toward workers of a roofing crew near the 9600 block of Tillixam Circle.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a runaway juvenile near Highway 18.
- Officers responded to a medical incident at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.

Wednesday, July 29

- Prescription medication and culturally significant property theft was reported near the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Counterfeit money was found at the 27000 block of Salmon River Highway.
- A warrant arrest occurred at the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.

Thursday, July 30

- Officers assisted an outside agency with a warrant service near the 28800 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Stolen items were reported near Grand Ronde Road.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with an investigation near the 8500 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Suspicious activity was reported near Agency Creek Road.

Friday, July 31

- Officers assisted an outside agency with a domestic disturbance near Balm and Sherman streets in Sheridan.
- Officers responded to an unconscious individual at Wandering Spirit RV Park and assisted until emergency medical services arrived.
- A driving complaint was reported near milepost 23 on Highway 18.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with a single car crash near milepost 1 on Highway 18B.
- Officers assisted an outside agency with an arrest near milepost 24 on Highway 18.
- Possible stalking was reported at the 9600 block of Hebo Road.
- A welfare check occurred near 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.

Compiled by Grand Ronde Tribal Police
Department Officer Prommissee Thornley

Walking On...

Raiden Barry McGee

July 20, 2020 – July 15, 2024

In loving memory of Raiden Barry McGee — forever 3.

Raiden was a bright light whose joy, curiosity and unconditional love left an everlasting mark on everyone who knew him. Though his time on earth was far too short, the impact of his life will be felt for generations.

Raiden was born on July 20, 2020, to Bryant “Christopher” McGee and Samantha McGee. From the very beginning, he was full of life, arriving with a spirit that could never be contained. He loved the simple things that made his world magical like bubbles, jumping on the trampoline, snuggling and watching his favorite shows, including “Pocoyo,” “Mickey Mouse” and “Bluey.” His favorite color was orange and foxes always seemed to capture his heart.

Raiden was profoundly autistic and nonverbal, but anyone who knew him understood that communication comes in many forms. His smiles, laughter, excitement and the way he experienced the world spoke louder than words ever could. He taught those around him patience, acceptance and the beauty of seeing the world differently. Through him, countless people learned about autism, compassion and unconditional love.

On July 15, 2024, Raiden quietly eloped and walked on to be with creator.

Raiden’s legacy did not end that day. In his honor, Samantha has founded the Raiden Bubble Project, an organization dedicated to raising awareness about autism, elopement (wandering or bolting) prevention, drowning prevention and supporting families walking similar journeys. Through bubbles, education, community events and acts of kindness, Raiden continues to save lives and touch hearts.

Raiden is deeply loved and survived by his parents, Christopher and Samantha McGee; and his future siblings, who will grow up knowing the incredible big brother who watches over them; grandparents, Daniel and Christina Mersch; uncles, aunties and extended family; and countless friends whose lives were forever changed by knowing him.

Although our hearts ache in his absence, we choose to remember the happiness he brought, the lessons he taught us and the love that will never fade. His life reminds us to celebrate every milestone, treasure every hug and never take a single moment for granted.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages you to join the Raiden Bubble Project so that Raiden’s legacy of protecting and advocating for children can continue.

Forever loved. Forever missed. Forever our sweet little love.

“Every time I look at the stars, I know that’s where you’ll be, you’ll be shining like you always do, watching over me. Although the pain I’m feeling is with me every day, the love you left inside my heart will never go away. So, when my days are darkest and I just can’t see the light, I’ll look up at the brightest star and know you’ll be there shining bright.”

Sheila Jo Keene

March 19, 1970 – Aug. 5, 2026

Tribal Elder Sheila Jo Keene passed away Aug. 5, 2026, at the age of 56. Bollman’s Tribute Center is assisting the family. Funeral service details were unavailable before presstime.

Christian Michael Dawsey

March 3, 2004 – July 23, 2026

Tribal member Christian Michael Dawsey passed away on July 23, 2026, at the age of 22.

Schrader, Aragon & Jacoby Funeral Home in Cheyenne, Wyoming, along with Allnut Funeral Service in Loveland, Colorado, are assisting the family. Funeral service details were unavailable before presstime.

Willard Murry Williams

May 14, 1942 – Aug. 3, 2026

Tribal Elder Willard Murry Williams passed away Aug. 3, 2026, at the age of 84.

Straub’s Funeral Home in Camas, Washington, is assisting the family. Funeral service details were unavailable before presstime.

STORY IDEAS?

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

Please share your suggestions at news@grandronde.org or by calling Editor Danielle Harrison at 503-879-4663.



WWW.SMOKE SIGNALS.ORG

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

BE A READING HERO

Volunteer with SMART Reading!

Make a lasting impact in just 30 minutes a week!

SMART Reading is looking for caring adults to volunteer as reading mentors for PreK students.

30 Minutes a week – Tuesdays from 9:45–10:15 – looking to start in early November

Located in the Early Care and Education building

- Books provided – no experience needed!
- Fun, easy, and rewarding!

Learn more & sign up: ashlee.webb@grandronde.org

Learn more about SMART Reading: [SMART Reading Children’s Literacy Nonprofit](#)

Together, we can help kids thrive—one book at a time.

LEADING WITH VISION. SERVING WITH INTEGRITY.

taxayam! I am Valeria Atanacio, and I humbly ask for your support and your vote for Tribal Council. I am the daughter of the late Kateri Atanacio, granddaughter of Beryle (Langley) Contreras and Angel Contreras, and great-granddaughter of Roy Langley and Delia LaRose. Grand Ronde has always been home—not simply because I grew up here, but because our people have always been my community. Today, I have the privilege of raising my own children here, while recognizing that many of our Tribal members call other places home. Whether you live in Grand Ronde or hundreds of miles away, we are one Nation, and every voice deserves to be heard.

Over the past several years, I have had the honor of meeting with Tribal members across our communities. Those conversations have strengthened my understanding of our shared hopes, our different experiences, and the responsibility of leadership. If elected, I would be honored to carry your voice to the Tribal Council table and work alongside you to build a stronger future for every Tribal member.

We Are The Future Ancestors.

www.VoteValeria.com | (971)-209-5406 | valeria.atanacio@gmail.com

Paid political ad

FROM GRAND RONDE ♥ WITH LOVE ♥

As the seasons shift and the air grows colder, compassion becomes our greatest medicine. Here in Grand Ronde, we know the strength of community, of showing up for one another, and of never letting anyone walk alone.

This September, I am gathering Compassion Bags for our houseless relatives – to carry warmth, dignity, and love from the reserve to the city. Each bag is more than supplies, it’s a reminder that they are seen, valued, and not forgotten.

From Grand Ronde with love,
let’s spread kindness across every mile.

Suggested Donations

-  Warm socks, gloves, beanies
-  First aid (band-aids, ointment, wipes)
-  Hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, feminine care)
-  Non-perishable snacks (protein bars, nuts, dried fruit)
-  Handwarmers, small blankets
-  Journals, pens, and handwritten words of encouragement

Every gift is a prayer in action. Every bag is a spark of hope. Together, we can turn the chill of September into the warmth of compassion.

Drop-off / Contact: Amber Case 503-793-2037



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



JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

CTGR EMPLOYMENT

Apply online at: www.grandronde.org/government/employment

Position Title	Grade	Min. Start Wage	Max Start Wage	Closing Date
Advocate	10	\$29.76./hr.	\$38.39/hr.	08/17/2026
Asset Inventory Specialist	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	Until Filled
Assistant Teacher	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	08/17/2026
Barista Trainee – Limited Duration	1	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	08/17/2026
Cashier/Fueler – Part Time (Variable Shifts)	3	\$16.04/hr.	\$16.04/hr.	08/17/2026
Clinic Manager – Salem Detox – GCR	14	\$90,630.26/yr.	\$116,255.21/yr.	08/17/2026
College Intern/Aide – Early Childhood Education	2	\$16.00/hr.	\$18.26/hr.	Until Filled
Dentist	20	\$151,691.92/yr.	\$205,141.88/yr.	Until Filled
Financial Wellness Coordinator	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Inclusion Coordinator	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	08/12/2026
Legal Assistant	11	\$32.74/hr.	\$42.16/hr.	Until Filled
Licensed Practical Nurse - Salem Detox - GCR	12	\$36.01/hr.	\$46.31/hr.	Until Filled
Licensed Practical Nurse – Salem Primary Care	12	\$36.01/hr.	\$46.31/hr.	Until Filled
Lodge Caregiver – Full-Time, Part-Time and On-Call	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	Until Filled
Medication Aide – Adult Foster Care	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	Until Filled
Mental Health Counselor – Sheridan - GCR	12	\$74,901.04/yr.	\$96,316.53/yr.	Until Filled
Milieu Safety Technician – Sheridan - GCR	6	\$20.76/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	Until Filled
Physician – Health & Wellness	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$433,201.52/yr. DOE	Until Filled
Physician – Salem Primary Care	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$433,201.52/yr. DOE	Until Filled
Physician Assistant – Salem OTP - GCR	20	\$151,691.92/yr.	\$205,141.88/yr.	Until Filled
Radiologic Technologist	10	\$29.75/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	08/10/2026
Senior Dental Assistant	9	\$27.05/hr.	\$34.95/hr.	Until Filled
Substance Use Disorder Therapist – Salem OTP - GCR	10	\$61,901.69/yr.	\$79,848.88/yr.	Until Filled
Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor - Part Time	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	Until Filled
Tribal Security Officer – Grave Shift Only	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	08/17/2026
Temporary Pool	2	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (CTGR) applies certain preference in all employment opportunities to applicants who meet the requirements of the job by utilizing the following preference tier system:

Tier 1: Enrolled Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde members
Tier 2: Spouses, Parents and/or Legal Guardians of CTGR members, current regular CTGR employees, enrolled members of other Indian Tribes, and Veterans
Tier 3: External candidates and current Spirit Mountain Casino employees not falling within tier 1 or tier 2

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde offers generous benefits and competitive pay.
Postings are open until filled and will be removed without notice.

For application assistance or questions, email Employmentteam@grandronde.org or call (503) 879-2109.





Pamala Warren-Chase



Grand Ronde Tribal Council

Paid political ad

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO CAREERS

POSTING TITLE	CLOSE DATE	WAGE/SALARY
Casino Beverage Waitstaff (*Part-Time)	8/13/26	\$15.55/hr. DOE + Tips
Guest Safety Specialist I	8/13/26	\$18.29/hr.
Guest Safety Specialist II	8/13/26	\$18.55/hr.
Host/Hostess-Cashier	8/13/26	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Uniform Attendant	8/13/26	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Amore Waitstaff (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$15.55/hr. DOE + Tips
Assistant Banquet Manager	Until Filled	\$48,329.22/yr. DOE
Assistant Food and Beverage Manager	Until Filled	\$48,329.22/yr. DOE
Bartender (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$16.50/hr. DOE + Tips
Cook (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Finance Specialist I	Until Filled	\$19.39/hr. DOE
Host/Hostess Cashier (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Pastry Chef	Until Filled	DOE
Prep Cook (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Sous Chef	Until Filled	DOE
Table Games Dealer – Multi-Game (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$15.55/hr. + Tips

\$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 applies certain preference in all employment opportunities to applicants who meet the requirements of the job by utilizing the following preference tier system:
Tier 1: Enrolled Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Members
Tier 2: Spouses, Parents and/or Legal Guardians of CTGR Members, enrolled members of other Indian Tribes, Veterans, and Current Employees
Tier 3: External Candidates – qualified applicants not falling within Tier 1 & 2

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ All positions are eligible for an incremental Hire-on Bonus
- ✓ Please reference the Job Description for job duties, qualifications, and required knowledge/skills.

employmentteam@spiritmtn.com<https://www.spiritmountain.com/careers>

Call (503) 879-3737 for application assistance.

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.





Great work!

TEACH our children our stories

BECOME A TEACHER.
APPLY TO AITP
www.pdx.edu/aitp

ATTENTION!!!

DUE TO ILLEGAL DUMPING OF TRASH IN THE RECYCLE BINS AND CONTAMINATION, THIS RECYCLING DEPOT IS ON THE VERGE OF CLOSING AND GOING AWAY.

CTGR FACILITIES DEPARTMENT

RECYCLE

Bottles and Tubs 4oz or Larger

Metals

Mixed Paper and Cardboard

Items Not Allowed



ATTENTION TRIBAL ELDERS!!

WILLS

VS

TRUSTS

Willamette Law Presentation
When: September 18th, 2026
Where: Elders Activity Center
Time: 11:00

Start with your Durable Power of Attorney, Advanced Directive & HIPPA. Then be assigned a Law Student to create your own Will or Trust free of charge for Tribal Elders & Spouses only.
CALL 503-879-2145
For more information if voicemail is reached, please leave a message and your call will be returned.

Lisa Leno for Tribal Council

Experienced Leadership. Proven Service.
A Heart for Our People.

For more than 30 years, I have had the privilege of serving our Tribe in many different roles—from working with our youth and families early in my career to serving on Tribal Council today. Throughout that time, my commitment has remained the same: to listen, lead with integrity, and always put the well-being of our Tribal members first.

I believe leadership is about bringing people together, building trust, and making thoughtful decisions that reflect our shared values while protecting the future of our Tribe.

Together, we have made meaningful progress by:

- Expanding housing opportunities
- Improving access to health care and increasing services
- Strengthening support for our elders, veterans, children, youth, and families
- Investing in economic development
- Defending and advocating for our Tribal sovereignty
- Championing paid parental leave, cultural leave, and December General Welfare debt forgiveness for Tribal members

While I am proud of what we have accomplished together, I know our best work is still ahead. The decisions we make today will shape opportunities for future generations, and I remain committed to serving with compassion, respect, accountability, and transparency.

What continues to inspire me most is the resilience, generosity, and love of our Tribal community. Those qualities remind me every day why this work matters.

It would be an honor to continue serving you on Tribal Council.
Humbly asking for your support and your vote.
Lisa Leno
For Tribal Council
“Listening. Building Trust. Serving Our People.”



2026--2027 BACK TO SCHOOL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

YOUTH EDUCATION IS NOW OPENING THE “BACK TO SCHOOL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM” FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR! THIS PROGRAM IS OFFERED TO ENROLLED TRIBAL MEMBER STUDENTS ENTERING KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12TH GRADE IN THE FALL OF 2026, AND SUPPORTS OUR YOUTH IN ACQUIRING NECESSARY SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND CLOTHING.

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WILL BE ISSUED A ONE-TIME \$150 WALMART GIFT CARD TO BE USED TOWARDS SCHOOL SUPPLIES OR SCHOOL CLOTHING. WHILE APPLICANTS WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE RECEIPT(S), ALL APPLICANTS ARE SUBJECT TO AUDIT AND MAY BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE RECEIPTS AT A LATER DATE.

REGISTRATION OPENS TODAY AND WILL BE A ROLLING APPLICATION THAT REMAINS OPEN UNTIL SEPTEMBER 30TH. PLEASE ALLOW UP TO THREE WEEKS AFTER THE DATE OF SUBMISSION TO PROCESS APPLICATIONS AND DISTRIBUTE YOUR GIFT CARD. PLEASE REACH OUT TO YOUTH EDUCATION AT 503-879-2101 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

SIGN UP HERE:

[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/RGY553QRD5P1BUNF9](https://forms.gle/RGY553QRD5P1BUNF9)



HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS

International Overdose Awareness Day is Aug. 31

Monday, Aug. 31, is a day set to raise awareness about overdose and encourage communities to support prevention and recovery.

An overdose happens when a person takes too much of a drug or medication, which can harm the body or cause death.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, overdose can occur with prescription medicines, illegal drugs or alcohol.

Signs of an overdose

Signs may include:

- Trouble breathing
- Unconsciousness or inability to wake up
- Blue or pale lips and skin
- Slow or irregular breathing

An overdose is a medical emergency and requires immediate help.

Preventing overdose

Health experts from the National Institute on Drug Abuse advise several ways to reduce overdose risk:

- Take medications exactly as prescribed
- Avoid mixing drugs or alcohol
- Seek help for substance use problems
- Learn about naloxone, a medication that can reverse some overdoses

Communities can support prevention by sharing information, reducing stigma and helping people access treatment. ■



Children’s Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month

August focuses on protecting children’s vision and raising awareness about overdose prevention.

Healthy vision helps children learn

Healthy vision helps children learn, read and play. Good eye care is important for children as they grow. According to the National Eye Institute, early eye exams can help detect vision problems before they affect learning.

Signs of vision problems in children

Parents and caregivers should watch for signs such as:

- Squinting often
- Sitting very close to screens or books
- Complaints of headaches or eye strain
- Difficulty seeing the board at school

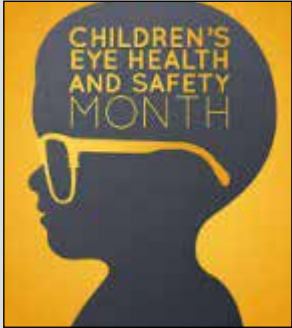
An eye doctor can check children’s vision and recommend glasses if needed.

Protecting children’s eyes

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend several ways to protect children’s eyes:

- Use protective eyewear during sports
- Limit screen time and take breaks
- Encourage outdoor play
- Schedule regular eye exams

Good eye care helps children succeed in school and everyday activities. ■



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. ■

Health & Wellness 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. ■

>>> JOIN OUR TEAM <<<

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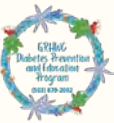
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AUGUST NEWSLETTER

DIABETES PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Immunization Month

Staying up to date on immunizations is just as important as diet and exercise for people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes. The American Diabetes Association and the Center for disease control advise patients to maintain the following vaccines:

- Influenza (Flu): Recommended annually. People with diabetes are six times more likely to be hospitalized and three times more likely to die from flu-related complications than those without diabetes.
- Pneumococcal (Pneumonia): Protects against serious bacterial lung infections that frequently affect diabetes patients.
- Hepatitis B: Diabetes patients are at a higher risk for this liver infection, often due to shared blood glucose meters or other medical equipment. The series is recommended for unvaccinated adults.
- COVID-19: Highly recommended to prevent severe respiratory illness and hospitalization.
- Tdap Booster: Protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough). A booster is needed every 8/10 years.
- Shingles: Recommended for adults aged 50 and older, as the stress of illness can trigger severe shingles outbreaks.
- RSV: May be recommended for adults aged 50 to 74 who are at high risk, or those aged 75 and older, to prevent severe respiratory illness.

Talk with your provider at your next visit about vaccines you may need.

Reminders

2026 Contest Powwow:
August 14-16 at Fort Yamhill , Wagon Road (near Hebo Rd / Highway 22)

No monthly diabetes meeting this month , we'll see you at Powwow!

Stay Hydrated!

Upcoming Events

• Aug 11 8am-4pm Back to school Event, Cheryl Kennedy building, call to schedule 503-879-2002 to schedule sports physicals

• 2026 Contest Powwow Aug 14-16 Fort Yamhill

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SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

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

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