



Grand Ronde
hosts Education
Summit — pg. 18



SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

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

SEPTEMBER 1, 2026



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Harris Reibach dances in an InterTribal dance during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.

2026 Contest Powwow edition

INSIDE — pages 11-17

Tribal member Kova Speer, 6, competes in the junior girls fancy dance category during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.



Proposed law changes may weaken Tribes' ability to protect sites

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

A federal law that requires developers and government agencies to consult with Tribes before making decisions that could affect them, is under threat from a proposed revision that opponents say would be devastating.

The National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers explains on its website, www.nathpo.org, that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act “is one of the primary federal processes Tribal nations and Tribal historic preservation officers use to ensure that sacred places, ancestral lands, burial places, cultural landscapes, historic properties, and associated traditions and practices are considered before federal agencies make decisions that may affect them.”



Briece Edwards

In practice, according to Tribal Historic Preservation Office Manager Briece Edwards, that means, for example, when a new highway or hospital is proposed, or a wildfire site to be replanted, local Tribes must be consulted.

“All total, we work with around 60 to 80 state and federal agencies and offices,” Edwards said.

In mid-July, the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation proposed significant revisions to the way the law is implemented. According to NATHPO, the proposed regulations “would substantially restructure the Section 106 process, weaken the role of Tribal nations and THPOs, and place considerably greater control with the federal agencies responsible for carrying out, funding, licensing, permitting or approving federal undertakings.”

The revisions would make consultation with

See LAW
continued on page 9

Wildland firefighting proves irresistible for some

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

It's hot, physically demanding, sometimes dangerous work, but wildland firefighting gets into the blood of some Tribal employees and keeps them hooked. There's something about being out on a fire line, running a chainsaw, directing the helicopters dropping water and fire retardant or hiking through remote back country feeling stunned by its beauty. It keeps Tribal members Alex Drake and Dustin Hawks, and Tribal Recreation Coordinator Leo Ayala, coming back year after year.

Tribal Post-Secondary Education Coordinator Joshua Clift, another part-time wildland firefighter, was out on assignment when this article was written. A few other



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal employees, from left, GIS Coordinator/Drone Pilot Alex Drake, Archaeology and Research Program Specialist Dustin Hawks and Recreation Coordinator Leo Ayala, all got their start as young adults working on the Tribe's seasonal wildland fire crew. They've moved on to other jobs within the Tribe but still go out with the wildland fire crews a few times each summer, with the approval of their supervisors and as their regular job duties allow.

See FIREFIGHTING
continued on page 8

General Council meeting

11 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 13

Tribal Council Chambers

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

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday meetings

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, Sept. 9.....	4 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 16.....	4 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 30.....	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.*

LETTERS

Dear Smoke Signals,

A friend saw a post on Facebook and asked me, “As a member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, do you resent being known as a white Tribe?”

I am proud to be a Grand Ronde member. I am proud that my spirit heals daily. I am proud that my white grandfather moved his family from Texas to Oregon for a better life. I am proud that both of my parents worked hard to provide for their family. I am proud that I am who I am.

After the Grand Ronde (Tribe) was terminated and denied recognition of federal status, an offer to relocate was made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Location offers included being moved to southern California, Texas, Washington, Colorado, Utah, Michigan and Illinois, to name a few.

The families left their homes, people and location their Tribes were forced to march to and live with military overseers.

It is time to look beyond skin color. The past was damaging to us. We came back together to claim our rightful place. Our songs, our dances, our hearts, our spirits, our dignity and our respect have persevered. I take my “white” heritage proudly. I take my Tribal identity proudly. It is a gift to be who we are.

Life has enough challenges. Personal choices have consequences that also affect others. Let’s embrace healing and learn a better way to live.

I’m Grand Ronde, I’m white and I’m proud.

Margo Mercier
Roll #885

TRIBAL OFFICE CLOSURES

Tribal offices will be closing noon Friday, Sept. 4, and closed Monday, Sept. 7, in observance of Labor Day. Offices will also be closed Friday, Sept. 25 in observance of National Native American Day.

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

CHACHALU

Tribal Museum and Cultural Center

smok signalz

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DEADLINE DATE

ISSUE DATE

MEMBERS OF:

Thursday, Sept. 3

Sept. 15

Indigenous Journalists Association

Tuesday, Sept. 22.....

Oct. 1

Oregon Newspaper Publishers Assoc.

Wednesday, Oct. 7.....

Oct. 15

2022 IJA General Excellence

Tuesday, Oct. 20.....

Nov. 1

2023 IJA General Excellence

EDITORIAL POLICY

Smoke Signals, 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. 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.

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

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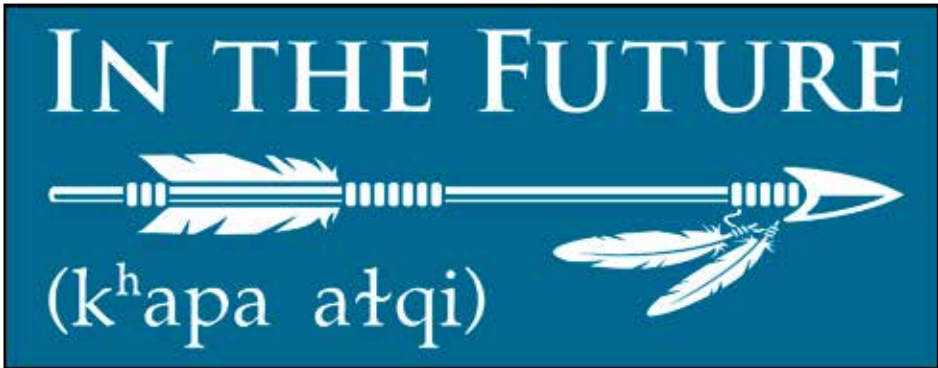
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kwayts-mun (September)

- 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.

taʔlam-mun (October)

- Sunday, Oct. 4 – General Council meeting, 11 a.m. Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Monday, Oct. 12 – Tribal offices closed in observance of Indigenous Peoples’ Day.
- Wednesday, Oct. 14 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Wednesday, Oct. 28 – 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



Ad by Samuel Briggs III

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.speaker.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

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

Food Bank news

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Food Bank is an equal opportunity provider. Contact Ambrose at 503-879-3663 or fambrose@marionpolkfoodshare.org for more information or to volunteer. ■

Committee & Special Event

Board meeting days and times

- **Ceremonial Hunting Board** meets as needed. Chair: Marline Groshong.
- **Culture Committee** meets as needed at the Veterans House. Chair: Molly Leno.
- **Editorial Board** meets monthly. The next meeting will be held via Zoom at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 17. 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 Ainaam at 503-879-2037. Chair: Dana Ainaam.
- **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 — Due to an increase of COVID-19 cases in the community, the Tribe decided to extend its reopening pause that began in early August through Labor Day weekend. The Tribal government website reported 35 active cases in the community. Additionally, Tribal staff were encouraged to work from home as the campus closed to visitors and guests, while essential employees were required to wear masks.

2016 — The Chinuk Wawa Family Language Retreat was held at the Tribal plankhouse, achaf-hammi, for the first time. The two-day event was attended by 15 children and their families and allowed participants to practice speaking Chinuk Wawa in an immersive environment.



2016 File photo

Activities included language games, drumming, singing and dancing.

2011 — The Tribe purchased the eight-acre Grand Ronde Middle School property from the Willamina School District for \$675,000 and began evaluating options for future use of the property. “Certainly, this property poses many possible benefits for the Tribe,” Tribal Lands Manager Jan Reibach said. The property was a part of the Tribe’s original reservation lands and was the site of powwows, General Council meetings and other events following Restoration.

2006 — The Tribe launched nsayka ikanum, or “our story,” an interactive website that covered the Tribe’s past, present and future. Hundreds of webpages were available for viewing, with a “research library” section planned for later that year. The library would allow users to take a deeper look into important Tribal documents, including whole treaties. Many sections of the site came with songs and spoken memories from Tribal members. Additionally, the site featured a button that could translate entries from English to Chinuk Wawa.

2001 — The Tribe finalized plans to begin construction of a family housing development. Located on a 20-acre site across from Tribal offices, 36 housing units were planned to be built, with completion scheduled for early 2003. The development would include one-to five-bedroom houses and every house would feature a yard and paths that led around the whole development. There were also plans for a community gathering place with picnic tables, benches and a fireplace.

1996 — A groundbreaking ceremony was held to commemorate the start of the Health & Wellness Center’s construction. The center, designed in the shape of a medicine wheel, was planned to include ambulance services, x-ray technologies and a pharmacy. The Family Action, Prevention, and Chemical Dependency programs would also be housed in the building. “Today, we take one step forward in fulfilling the dream of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde,” Human Services Division Manager Cheryle A. Kennedy said. “It took the efforts of many people and the support of Tribal Council to realize this vision.”

1991 — The Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program sponsored a sober dance and provided activities for people of all ages, with a focus on youth. The dance was attended by 150 people and included Tribal and non-Tribal members. The program also sponsored a volleyball tournament, with trophies given to first and second place and a ribbon for third place. The goal was that those events would prevent youth from using drugs and alcohol during Contest Powwow.

1986 — The Enrollment Office sent out a notice to Tribal members about a high number of incomplete files from people wanting to enroll in the Tribe. Most files were rejected due to the exclusion of necessary documentation to prove Tribal descendency. Enrollees were asked to submit approved documents including state-issued certified full birth certificates, baptismal certificates, court orders of paternity or adoption decrees. Hospital records were also accepted but only if the front and back were completed by the hospital.

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.

Tribal Council formalizes partnership with Polk County for mobile crisis intervention services

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved a memorandum of understanding with Polk County to ensure that Tribal members experiencing a mental health crisis will have the care they need regardless of the day or hour of the week.

The agreement was approved at the Wednesday, Aug. 12, council meeting.

Under the agreement, Tribal members residing in Polk County “have access to timely, culturally appropriate mobile crisis intervention services and stabilization services.”

With the MOU, the Tribe agrees to provide crisis intervention through the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center during regular business hours, while Polk County will provide these services during evenings, weekends and holidays, ensuring that Tribal members receive support at any time.

“We’ve been working with Polk County for quite some time and they just stood up a new crisis center and we have crisis services during business hours but after hours, we do not have those services,” Tribal Executive Director of Health Services Kelly Rowe said during a Tuesday, Aug. 11, Legislative Action Committee meeting. “And we want to re-execute our

MOU with them to have this available so that we can collaborate and if there are interventions with our Tribal members, we want to be able to make sure that we are getting that information back and forth between us...and that they’re communicating with us so that we’re able to take over that care and get them into our services.”

The MOU also outlines coordination procedures, including further steps when individuals are stable and follow-up communication required within one business day when Polk County responds to a Tribal member in crisis.

“Both parties commit to protecting confidentiality, complying with all applicable laws, honoring Tribal sovereignty and meeting regularly to strengthen collaboration and improve service delivery,” the agreement states. “This MOU supports a unified approach to crisis care that promotes safety, cultural responsiveness and continuity of services for Tribal members.”

Rowe said the Tribe was also working toward developing an agreement with Yamhill County.

“These are our people and we can treat them and know how they should be treated,” Tribal Council member Matthew Haller said. “That’s the entire philosophy in a small nutshell of why we do these expanded services outside of Grand

Ronde.”

In other news, Tribal Council:

- Approved an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program grant for up to \$300,000. If awarded, funds would be used to hire a consultant to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study that will provide the technical foundation for improving access and safety for current and future Tribal housing developments;
- Approved an amendment to a multi-year funding agreement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to add a 105(l) lease to include Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center, which will bring the Tribe an additional \$296,958 of unrestricted funds. The 105(l) lease requires the BIA or Indian Health Service to compensate Tribes for the operational costs of Tribal facilities used to deliver federal programs. Unlike a traditional lease, it acts as a cost-based reimbursement method, where Tribes can be compensated for expenses including rent, depreciation, principal and interest on loans, operations, maintenance and repairs, according to the BIA website;
- Approved an application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Medication Assisted Treatment – Prescription Drug and Opioid Program grant for up to \$750,000. If awarded, funds would be used for expanding access to evidence based medications for opioid use disorder and comprehensive behavioral health services for individuals with opioid use disorder across the Tribe’s rural and frontier service area;
- Approved limited waivers of sovereign immunity for Inmar RX Solutions Inc. and McKesson Corporation. Inmar provides pharmaceutical return and billing reconciliation services to pharmacies and McKesson provides wholesale drug and medical supply services to pharmacies;
- Approved an intergovernmental security and access agreement, as well as a limited waiver of sovereign immunity, with Oregon Health Authority;
- Approved an application to Business Oregon for its Regional Infrastructure Grant for up to \$250,000. If awarded, funds would be used to offset some of the expenses for the Natural Resources Department expansion project;
- Approved an application to the Bureau of Land Management Rangeland Resource Manage-

ment Grant for up to \$250,000.

If awarded, funds would be used to support the purchase of equipment necessary to establish a hazardous fuels reduction branch within the Natural Resources Department’s fire program;

- Approved an application to the Office on Violence Against Women Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program for up to \$900,000. If awarded, funds would be used to continue to sustain and strengthen the Warriors of Hope Program’s response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking and stalking within the Tribal community;
- Approved an application to the Administration for Children and Families Family and Youth Services Bureau for the Tribal Personal Responsibility Education Program Grant for up to \$3.25 million. If awarded, funds would be used to continue and extend the Tribe’s Tribal PREP partnership with the Sheridan and Willamina school districts to deliver evidence-based pregnancy, STI and HIV prevention education to Native youth;
- Approved entering into an agreement with the Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundations for America the Beautiful Challenge Funds of approximately \$650,000, which will be used to support habitat restoration on three Tribal conservation properties;
- Approved an application to the Administration for Native Americans Economic Advancement Grants for Local Empowerment Welders to Elders grant for up to \$500,000. If awarded, funds would be used by the Tribe’s TERO program to expand Tribal economic advancement through a culturally grounded, community focused initiative that supports long term economic resilience;
- Approved an application to the Federal Transit Administration Public Transportation of Indian Reservation Program for up to \$550,000. If awarded, funds would be used to continue public transportation contracts with Yamhill County and Pacific Crest Bus Lines to provide continued regular public transit services to the Grand Ronde community;
- And approved enrolling four infants, 14 non-infants and one emergency non-infant into the Tribe because they meet the enrollment requirements in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

To watch the entire meeting, visit www.grandronde.org and click on the Videos tab. ■



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.

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

We want to hear from you!

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

Meeting reviews options for multi-use path

By Nicole Montesano
Smoke Signals staff writer

A multi-use path from Grand Ronde Road to Spirit Mountain Casino, enthusiastically approved by Tribal members in a 2018 advisory vote, is still moving forward, Tribal Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb said in a community meeting Wednesday, Aug. 12.

Webb and Nick Gross, project manager for contractor Kittelson & Associates, reviewed the options that have been discussed since a similar meeting in May.

Webb also provided a brief history of the project.

“In 2021 we applied for an ODOT grant that helped us look at the feasibility,” he said. “It took us a couple years to get an agreement in place, working with ODOT and the federal government. ... In 2023, we got the money. In 2025, we actually got the agreement so we could start spending those dollars and the Tribe hired Kittelson & Associates.”

Webb held a meeting in May to solicit feedback as he and the architect began exploring different options. The August meeting was intended to show how things have developed since then and to solicit additional comments.

According to Webb, by the end of the year Kittelson will submit a conceptual plan with a preferred route and alignment and a rough cost estimate. With that in hand, the Tribe will seek grant funding for the formal design and engineering phase. Once that is complete, the Tribe will seek grant funding for actual construction.

Breaking the project into smaller pieces makes it easier to obtain funding since the Tribe needs to ask for smaller amounts of money, rather than the entire cost up front, Webb said.

Gross explained that the tentative plan is to start the trail either

near Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center or the former Grand Ronde Rail Depot and run it along the old railroad tracks to the casino parking lot, ending near the Tribal gas station. Amenities at the trailheads might include such things as maps, signs, bicycle racks, bicycle fixing stations, benches and possibly a water fountain on Grand Ronde Road.

The trailheads will also offer opportunities for “cultural heritage recognition” items, Gross said.

There were 10 “most critical elements” that he and Webb were seeking comment on. These included whether the starting trailhead should be at the former train depot or by the museum, the need to widen sidewalks along Grand Ronde Road and move utilities to accommodate the path, clearing vegetation within the former railroad corridor, whether to cross the South Yamhill River and how to protect users along the elevated section of railroad grade east of Jahn Road.

They also included whether the frontage road on the north side of the highway, across from the casino, should include a separate path or if the path should go into a shared-use frontage road. Additionally, where the path should cross the highway and end on the casino’s property, the need to put in a small bridge to cross the drainage ditch by the casino and ending trailhead locations.

The trail will need to cross Highway 18 at some point, most likely via an overpass. Webb said that might also be an opportunity to create a distinctive bridge featuring Tribal cultural art or designs.

Six people, including Tribal Council members, community members and adjacent landowners, spoke about the project and asked questions. Safety lighting for the path was requested. Webb promised that “there will be illumination for the whole path.” Another commenter

was upset about the need to clear vegetation.

Webb said it is “mostly invasive,” but added that landscaping with native species is planned.

“We will work closely with Jeremy Ojua (Tribal Native Plant Nursery Supervisor) and the Native Plant Nursery, to make sure we get native plants and also that they’re coming from here and this path would follow that,” he said, adding that path will accommodate disability aids such as motorized wheelchairs.

One man asked whether the project management team was

considering a tunnel, rather than a bridge over the highway. Webb said tunnels were discussed, but are less practical, in part because Grand Ronde has a very high water table and because tunnels tend to be more expensive. An overcrossing, Webb said, must be engineered to support the weight of pedestrians, bicycles and other typical equipment used on multi-use paths. A tunnel, however, must support the entire weight of the traffic passing above, including semi-trucks pulling fully-loaded trailers. ■

Youth volleyball camp



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member and Division I college athlete Caitlin Zimbrick shows Tribal member Ellie Perry, 7, how to position her hand to serve a volleyball during the Volleyball Fundamentals & Skills Camp in the Tribal gym Tuesday, Aug. 18. The two-day camp was designed to build strong foundational volleyball skills, such as serving, passing, setting and digging, while improving overall athletic movement. It was coached by Caitlin and her mother, longtime volleyball coach Carrie Zimbrick. Approximately 15 youth attended the camp that was hosted by the Tribe’s Youth Empowerment & Prevention Program.



Mila Linton, 11, bumps a volleyball while participating in a drill during the Volleyball Fundamentals & Skills Camp in the Tribal gym Tuesday, Aug. 18.

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Courtesy photo by Bob Swingle

A delegation of Tribal Natural Resources Department staff led a tour of the Tribe’s Chahalpam conservation property for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission, along with other government officials and conservation groups, near Stayton Thursday, Aug. 13.

Tribal staff, ODFW Commission tour Chahalpam property

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals editor

STAYTON — A delegation of Tribal Natural Resources Department staff led a tour of the Tribe’s Chahalpam conservation property for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission, along with other government officials and conservation groups.

Chahalpam, which means “place of the Santiam Kalapuya people,” is 462 acres that the Tribe acquired between 2015 and 2018 through the Bonneville Power Administration’s Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program. It is located on the North Santiam River southeast of Salem in Marion County and just downstream from Stayton.

Tribal Natural Resources Department Restoration Ecologist/ Fish and Wildlife Policy Analyst Lindsay McClary organized the tour. She was joined by Tribal Council members Kathleen George and Toby McClary, as well as NRD Manager Colby Drake and Tribal Fish & Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen.

The tour lasted 90 minutes and approximately 50 people attended.

“There were definitely more people here than anticipated,” Lindsay McClary said. “I thought it was great. I spend a lot of the time focused on that property so it was fun to have others see it. It felt like a natural fit with the staff members

that were there.”

In addition to ODFW Commission members, others in attendance included Marion County commissioners and staff, ODFW staff, Cascadia Wildlands, Association of Northwest Steelheaders and the Native Fish Society.

The tour included two stops. At the first, the significance of salmon and cooperative partnerships was discussed. At the second stop, attendees learned more about how the Tribe and ODFW collaborated to complete early-stage restoration steps, which included reestablishing trees and shrubs, helping set a foundation for future floodplain reconnection and ecological recovery.

“I’m proud of the work that our Natural Resources Department is doing on our mitigation properties,” Toby McClary said. “Restoring habitat and bringing back native species strengthens our land and our cultural practices moving forward. Having Marion County Commissioners and members of the ODFW Commission present on this tour shows that the state is watching and our restoration efforts are an example for future leaders.”

The Tribe has acquired 2,990 acres of conservation land in Oregon during the past 14 years in Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Lane and Linn counties through the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program. ■

Reibach appointed to board

Tribal Economic & Lands Director Jan Looking Wolf Reibach has been appointed to the board of directors for the Strategic Economic Development Corporation.

He announced the appointment during a Tuesday, Aug. 18, Legislative Action Committee meeting.

“As the team continues to make progress with strategic development and opportunity assessments, we have also substantially increased connections with federal, state, local and private economic development organizations to ensure that CTGR’s voice is heard and as the first people of Western Oregon and the treaty Tribe, we have a place at the table regarding economic development within our homelands,” he said.

SEDCOR Operations Director Jenni Kistler said the organization looks forward to working with the Tribe in a new capacity.

“Since 1982, SEDCOR has been the leading economic development agency for the mid-Willamette Valley,” she said. “The organization partners with local communities, businesses and Tribal governments to foster regional growth and diversification. This year, SEDCOR is excited to welcome Jan Looking Wolf Reibach to the board of directors. We look forward to working together in this new capacity and further growing our relationship with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.”

Reibach said that his department has spent several months expanding the Tribe’s connections with economic development organizations and decision-makers throughout Oregon.

“This includes establishing contact with the governor’s Prosperity Council and participating in the Business Oregon Statewide Economic Development Strategy Advisory Council,” he said. “We have also secured a position on the Gladstone Economic Development Advisory Board, providing an additional opportunity to represent the Tribe’s interests and perspectives in regional economic development discussions.”

Reibach added that these efforts are intended to assist in the department’s core work of developing Tribal economic strategies and initiatives.

“More broadly, the objective is to establish CTGR as an active participant in economic development conversations throughout Oregon and to develop relationships with the public, private and governmental entities that influence investment, infrastructure, housing, workforce, business development and other economic conditions affecting the Tribe and its homelands,” he said. ■



Jan Looking Wolf Reibach

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Camaraderie is a big part of the experience

FIREFIGHTING continued
from front page

employees are working to earn wildfire certifications.

Drake, Hawks and Ayala all got their start as young adults in the Tribe's seasonal wildland fire crew. Although they've moved on to other jobs within the Tribe, they still go out with the fire crews a few times each summer, with the approval of their supervisors, as their regular job duties allow.

There are a lot of reasons why they enjoy firefighting and one of them is simply that it's fun, the trio said. A lot of elements are tied up in that idea of fun – the adrenaline rush, the camaraderie in the face of danger that often leads to lifelong friendships, the chance to be outside instead of behind a desk, the physical and mental challenges, the service to the Tribe and to the public affected by those fires.

"It's honorable work," Ayala said.

Ayala said he particularly enjoys communicating with helicopters, leading or directing them where to drop water or fire retardant.

"It feels like a mission that we're all working together to get done," he said.

Drake said he's drawn to working on the front lines of the fire, called the hot line.

"Running a chainsaw cutting all the brush, with people digging behind you, that's pretty exciting," he said. "I like that. Or prepping a road so you can do a backburn if the fire's coming toward it. Fighting fire with fire is a big tool."

He added, "Getting out of the office a couple weeks at a time is good for my health, good for my mental well-being."

The Tribe hires seasonal crews of wildland firefighters annually,

as well as maintaining a full-time crew year-round. Many Tribal members now in other departments started in those seasonal crews. A few continue to take occasional assignments during fire season.

"While non-NRD wildfire support staff are not essential for daily program operations, they bring huge value," Tribal Fire Management and Protection Program Manager Andrew Puerini said. "All our current volunteers maintain significant personal and program investments in training, certifications and experience. They find time in their busy schedules to assist with wildfire training, response, local patrols, prescribed burning and meeting other program goals."

The Tribe also benefits financially, along with the firefighters, Drake said. When on assignment, employees from outside the Natural Resources Department are not receiving their regular salary, but are instead paid under the wildland fire program, which is reimbursed by the federal government.

"The Tribe's now invested all this time and energy in my getting all those skills and experiences, like getting me able to drive an engine," Hawks said.

All three said they typically go out on one or two assignments per summer, occasionally three.

"It gets me out of the office, out in nature, using a chainsaw or driving a truck," Ayala said.

He loves the adrenaline rush of being called out, the travel to national parks and states he might never have otherwise visited, and the chance to work in remote areas that "a lot of people never get to step on. It's pretty cool to be a part of that. It just looks untouched by humans."

And while he takes the job seri-

ously, he said, "It's nice to enjoy the scenery, take in where you are and just enjoy the moment."

Camaraderie is a big part of the experience, Ayala said.

"You're working with these guys at least 16 hours a day," he said. "You build lifetime connections. I think that's a lot of what keeps people coming back."

Drake, who grew up in Sutherland and now works as the Tribe's GIS coordinator and drone pilot, began working with the seasonal fire crew at 18.

"My brother was here, and that's why I came," he said, noting that Colby Drake, now serving as the Natural Resources Department manager, also began his career in wildland firefighting.

"I'd come up here and live with him in the summers," he said.

Hawks said he also reconnected with the Tribe through the seasonal wildland firefighting program, before transferring to the Cultural Resources Department, where he is a specialist for the Archeology and Research Program.

"I had never lived here," he said. "I attended powwows with my grandmother. So, there was a disconnect with what was going on here. This work was what allowed me to reconnect."

And although he now enjoys his current role, "I still have a need and a want to fight fires," Hawks said. "It's exciting and challenging, mentally and physically."

In fact, his preference works to the advantage of both departments, as he serves as a kind of unofficial liaison between the two, which often collaborate on projects such as bringing back the cultural tradition of prescribed burns for land management.

"It's good to have somebody who speaks fire and works with Cultural Resources," he said.

The trio said they also enjoy the variety. Crews may be fighting on the front lines of a single major fire, waiting in town for assignments that send them out to a different fire each day, or being held in reserve onsite.

"It's not always camping out ... I do like being able to stay in hotels as well and use the amenities to

kind of recharge or sleep well for the next day and being able to use the swimming pools and the hot tubs," Ayala said. "I always find that it's almost like a vacation, but you know you have to work the next morning. But then on the other side, there's times where maybe you get no dinner and you've gotta have an MRE (military field ration meal) for the night, because you're out in the middle of nowhere. Both are good; I think both teach you a lot about yourself and what you're capable of."

Even the tools used vary depending on the type of fire. While chainsaws and water tenders are common, for grass fires, Drake said, they may use the comically-named "flapper" – a heavy rubber mat affixed to a handle – to smother the flames. Even leaf blowers come into play at times for small creeping fires, where they are used to blow burning leaves back into the ashes behind the main line, where lack of fuel extinguishes the small blazes.

There are unexpected moments as well. On his last assignment, Drake said, during a check of a road after flames had gone through, he found a partially burnt match that turned out to be evidence of arson.

Grand Ronde crews are known throughout the relatively small world of wildland firefighting, the three said, and are often specifically requested. That respect and the appreciation of local residents at fire scenes feels good. When stationed in a town, Ayala said, "It's not uncommon for the locals to pay for your dinner or your breakfast or bring snacks. It's really nice just to get that recognition."

In addition, because they have years of experience and training, the three often serve as mentors to young firefighters as well as representatives of the Tribe.

"This is oftentimes the way people are exposed to the Tribe, because we go all over the U.S. and the Tribe is very well respected," Hawks said. "It's pretty amazing; people know who we are."

Hawks likes knowing he may be someone else's first contact on a journey back to the Tribe.

"It's an opportunity to give back in ways that were given to me," he said. ■

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

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

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

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

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

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

For more information, contact Shauna Skinner at 503-879-3916 or email shauna.skinner@spiritmtn.com. ■

Proposed changes being reviewed by Tribes across the country

LAW continued
from front page

Tribes optional in many instances, and exclude “noncompact, unimproved natural features such as mountains, valleys, bodies of water or landscapes, including ethnographic landscapes,” from being considered historic Tribal property. They would also delete language that recognizes “the special expertise of Indian Tribes in assessing the eligibility of properties of religious and cultural significance. It also removes express references to the government-to-government relationship, Tribal sovereignty, treaty rights and the fact that culturally significant places are often located on ancestral, aboriginal or ceded lands,” according to NATHPO.

“It’s minimizing Tribal voices, which in many ways would appear to look like ignoring the sovereignty and the skills and knowledge abilities of the Tribe,” Edwards said. “So that’s its own problem there.”

Those are significant problems, Edwards said – and not only for Tribes.

“The suggested changes apply to all cultural resources,” he said. “Meaning that if somebody decided that a solar array or a solar farm would be a better use of the footprint of Constitution Hall in Philadelphia, they would be allowed to destroy and remove Constitution Hall and put up solar panels. This is a sea change in the law, or the interpretation of the law, that affects all citizens of the country.”

In addition, he said, “the Tribe has not been consulted about these changes, and the agency, the advisory council has not actually pro-

vided those to us for comment and review, which is standard process for that agency in particular, but also for all agencies. So that hasn’t occurred. Only by the awareness of individuals who work in that world, did suddenly this become something (we were) aware (of).”

Tribes across the country are now reviewing the proposed changes and offering comments on them. NATHPO said it is working closely with Tribes to address what they can do.

For Grand Ronde, Edwards said, state laws may offer some protection, as these also contain broad requirements for the protection of historic cultural sites.

Edwards said agencies and developers sometimes consider consultation something of a last-minute box to check off – and that can create problems. Consulted early enough, Tribes may be able to save companies or jurisdictions money by suggesting changes before thousands of dollars have been spent on design and engineering.

“I don’t know an agency that hasn’t thought about the expenditure of \$10,000 for a pole barn, or billions of dollars for a bridge, that they haven’t been thinking about it for years,” he said.

But often, consultation is one of the last steps in the process, rather than the first, leading to complaints that Tribes are causing delays.

“What we’re experiencing now is the vilification of Tribes,” Edwards said. “Tribes are the ostensible reason for the problem here and they’re not. This Tribe in particular, we want to work and be the advocate for the resource. The sooner we have awareness that something may be occurring, the more effective

we are at that. Engineers are great. Because if you give an engineer a complete set of parameters, they can find an answer. But if you don’t tell them the cultural resources are one of the parameters, they can’t take it into the development design. And again, that then makes the resource the problem. Not the lack of planning. Which is where I would suggest it needs to sit.”

In some instances, conversations can be difficult and may span years. The Tribe often has knowledge that even accredited archeologists from non-Native firms do not, thanks to oral history, or *ikanum*, that spans thousands of years, as well as a broad perspective, Edwards said.

“If we’re talking about a highway project, we say, ‘Does it have to go right through here, because we know that culturally, the stories about that river, the *ikanum* of that place, is that it changes a lot. Have you talked to your geologist, and reviewed the integrity of that

place, so that you’re not paying for the road five times, because of floods?’ ... In other instances, we’ve been able to say, we know that this was a cedar harvest area, but the wildfire took it out. When you’re replanting, rather than putting fir, could you put the cedars back? Future generations will then have materials for harvest.”

When a new project is proposed, Edwards said, “We need to have a conversation: Have you accounted for all of the resources? Not just archeology. But what are the viewsheds? What are the fish? What’s the riparian? What are the plants in that area? Those plants may be the demonstration of that land being stewarded 150 years ago. And we can look at that, and go, ‘Well, this looks like those are cultural resources.’ But then, that person has their next step. And that’s different than somebody coming in saying, ‘Hey, we want to break ground on this in three months.’” ■

Fellow visit



2026-27 Hatfield Fellow Jade Fong (Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians) stands to the left of 2025-26 Hatfield Fellow Chrissa Wilkie (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians/Klamath) in front of Visionaries statue outside the Grand Ronde Tribal Governance Center during a visit Wednesday, Aug. 19. Fong is relocating from San Francisco to join House Rep. Maxine Dexter’s staff in Washington, D.C., as the incoming Hatfield Fellow. Wilkie spent the last year working for House Rep. Andrea Salinas and plans to return to Portland. Each year, the Spirit Mountain Community Fund selects a Native American to serve as the Hatfield Fellow and intern in one of Oregon’s congressional delegates’ Washington, D.C., offices.

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Basketball court under construction at old powwow grounds

By Alexander Bliven

Smoke Signals intern

Construction began Monday, Aug. 10, on a new full-size community basketball court on the old powwow grounds across the street from the Tribal Governance Center.

The project was a donation to the Tribe by the Big Ten Conference.

The court will measure 50-by-84 feet, the same dimensions as a high school basketball court and will include lighting for night-time play. It will be located near the Tribal education complex and gym. That area was selected because of its proximity to those facilities.

Tribal Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb also noted that the Tribal campus master plan designates that portion of the old powwow grounds as open space, making the court consistent with planned use of the area.

In an email to Tribal employees, Webb said the court was donated by the Big Ten Conference, “reflecting their support for youth wellness,



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

A new full-size community basketball court is under construction on the old powwow grounds, near the Tribal education complex and gym. The project was a donation to the Tribe by the Big Ten Conference.

recreation and our community’s long-term health.”

Big Ten is a collegiate athletic conference comprising 18 universities across the United States, including the University of Oregon. Its mission is to balance high-level

college sports with academic success while promoting “integrity, fairness and competitiveness.”

Tribal Communications Director Sara Thompson said the partnership developed from Big Ten’s interest in exploring the Pacific Northwest.

“When the Big Ten expanded to include the University of Oregon, they expressed a desire to explore the Pacific Northwest as part of

their Big Life series,” Thompson said. “They came out earlier this year for initial conversations on how we could work together. Everything grew from there.”

According to Big Ten, the Big Life series is an immersive educational program through which Big Ten student-athletes, coaches and administrators learn about the history, culture and communities of different regions. During this year’s Pacific Northwest program, more than 100 of the program’s participants visited Grand Ronde for the Veterans Powwow.

The old powwow grounds area will be an active construction site during the project. Those nearby may notice temporary impacts to parking and pathways adjacent to the site, with signage posted to safely direct foot traffic.

Webb expected excavation and concrete slab work to be finished by Aug. 20. The concrete will then need 14-21 days to cure before court surfacing, hoops and lights can be installed, with a tentative completion date of late September.

The court’s hours are expected to align with those of the Tribal Gym: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. ■

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. ■

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2026 Contest Powwow



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Joe Ulestad participates in grand entry of the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14.

Powwow draws largest c



Tribal member Alicialeigh Selwyn dances with her 1-year-old nephew, Tribal member Seven Norwest, during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.

By Nicole Montesano
Smoke Signals staff writer

Stepping and turning to the pounding drums, the dancers filed in, a line that coiled around on itself, filling the arena, while the audience packed the stands and crowded onto the walkways.

The 2026 annual Grand Ronde

Contest Powwow, held at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14 through Sunday, Aug. 16, was, as usual, a packed event. Attendees traveled to Grand Ronde to spend time with family and friends, dance and enjoy the feeling of being immersed in tradition and culture.

Some women danced with babies in their arms, and toddlers and



Lucy Tewawina, 9, left, and her sister Yvette Tewawina, 4, both Paiute/Hopi, get ready for the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo



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Warm Springs presented a song of gratitude and prayer. As

children accompanied their Elders.

In contrast to the past two years, the weather was nearly perfect; dry and warm, but not overly hot.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier, Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George and Tribal Council members Kathleen George, Toby McClary and Lisa Leno danced in Friday night's grand entry and again in Saturday's afternoon grand entry, where they were joined by Tribal Council member Matthew Haller.

Tribal member Bobby Mercier gave the invocation Friday evening. On Saturday afternoon, Carlos Calica (Warm Springs) gave the invocation, and singers from

the song drew to a close, dancers swayed to make the bells on their regalia ring out softly in tribute.

James Smith of Toppenish, Washington, gave the invocation Sunday.

The evening grand entry on Saturday was canceled. Instead, there was impromptu drumming and singing by the Grand Ronde Canoe Family. Non-traditional songs were also played.

"We were getting close to going over our scheduled close and I didn't want to rush people getting food, maybe going to the lodge to change clothes or grab jackets, and wanted to give the drums a good break from singing," Arena Director Anthony Quenelle said. "It was my call for our visitors. Talking with Bobby (Mercier), we decided to do a Canoe Family presentation for all of our guests and Tribal members. Everyone seemed to enjoy it."

Quenelle shared the microphone



Tribal member Emmalynn Warren, 12, dances in the "School is Cool" special during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.



crowd in recent memory



Tribal member Willow Squetimkin, 10, competes in the junior girls jingle dance category during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15. She placed second in the category.



Tribal member Nacoma Liebelt, 17, dances during Ampkwa Advocacy's red regalia special during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.

with emcees Marty Thurman and Howie Thompson, keeping things moving along briskly between them.

"I would just like to say that I am so proud of our Powwow Special Events Board that puts this powwow on every year and still tries to make it better than the last," Quenelle said. "I am very grateful for all the drums; Mountain Kree (host drum), Bad Soul (local host drum) and all of the invited drums: Milepost 30, Little Bear, Meskwaki Nation, Bad Nation and Bad War Cloud. Hayu masi to our emcees Howie Thompson and Marty Thurman, our head dance judge Tavian Lasley-Star and our head drum judge Randell Paskimin. And to all the many workers we had, hayu masi."

The 2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Court is full this year. The annual pageant took place Friday morning at the Tribal Governance Center. Friday evening began with the ceremonies for outgoing royalty and crowning of the new court, at the powwow grounds, before grand entry.

Senior Miss Grand Ronde Queen is Leloo Quenelle, Junior Miss Grand Ronde Queen is Ulali Quenelle, Junior Miss Grand Ronde Princess is Graciela Ornelas, Little Miss Grand Ronde Queen is Safia Ben El Aali, Little Miss Grand Ronde Princess is Amira Ben El Aali and Tiny Tot Princesses are

Kova Speer, Josie Craig, Briar Ashley and Zoey Crawley.

Jackie Barkley (Umatilla), a traditional dancer, said she was enjoying her first chance to enjoy the dancing and festivities in awhile.

"I'm happy to be here because I haven't hardly gotten to go to any powwows this summer; my life's been too busy," Barkley said. Barkley does her own beading for her regalia, with full sets of purses, hair ties, cuffs and other pieces, based on a design her great-grandmother had made for her mother.

"It started falling apart," Barkley said, so she has replicated it five times, in different colors. She wore two of the sets in turn for dancing at the powwow but said she plans to give one of them to someone in the family – she hasn't decided whom yet.

Her nephew wears the cuffs from the original set with his regalia, she said, and she has made sets for her daughter, a granddaughter and niece.

Julie Johnson, (Northern Paiute and Shoshone), of Salem, was also happy to be at the powwow. A jingle dancer, she said she loves to dance.

"I've danced most all my life and it's a big part of my health, my wellness and healing," Johnson said. "And it's important to me to be here, to visit with friends and family."

**See POWWOW
continued on page 14**



Tribal member Stacey Runningbird participates in an honor dance before Ampkwa Advocacy's red regalia special during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15. The nonprofit organization, dedicated to supporting Indigenous communities by raising awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, partnered with the Tribe's Warriors of Hope Program for the special that featured categories for men and boys, as well as women and girls.

Brendyn Smallwood competes in the junior boys grass dance category during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds.



Qoya Garza (Siletz) collects giveaway items during the "School is Cool" special during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.

POWWOW continued
from page 13

Two of her daughters had also joined her for the day.

A few miles away on campus, Tribal Recreation Coordinator Leo Ayala was hosting his biggest basketball tournament weekend yet; a marathon affair with 117 teams playing. The tournament consisted of 11 divisions, Ayala said, with more than 400 players participating.

“Over 800 spectators for the day came in waves and filled the parking lots, more than I had ever seen before,” he said.

The basketball tournament started a few years ago, with a few teams playing, but has grown rapidly, outgrowing its original site at the powwow grounds, then its site at Fort Yamhill, Ayala said.

“Having it during powwow helps, because it opens it up into a full weekend of stuff to do,” he said. “It’s crazy, how big it has gotten. We had five courts going. ... we’re maybe even outgrowing this area, now.”

He said the event now draws players from “as far as Olympia, Washington, and all over the state of Oregon,” ranging from children to seniors and college-level players, many of whom enjoy returning every year. Several Tribes send teams as well. An added draw is that many of the volunteers and referees remain the same each year, he said.

Ayala said he rented bounce houses to keep the players’ children and younger siblings entertained over the course of the lengthy day, this year and four vendors were on



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

The Grand Ronde Veterans Honor Guard participates in the 1 p.m. grand entry of the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, Aug. 15.

hand to provide food for sale.

He said the event also included “playing all the best jams, to keep people rocking all day.”

Multiple employees from other departments pitched in to help, with people from maintenance, facilities, housekeeping and TERO putting together hoops, mowing

extra areas in case the event needed to spill over into a larger area, keeping the restrooms and other areas clean and providing parking assistance, while other staff provided maps and Public Health employees, as well as the Youth Empowerment & Prevention Program staffed tables and provided

t-shirts and prizes. Local sports teams staffed scoring tables and held fundraisers.

The event ran from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

“It’s a long day, but a great day,” Ayala said. “It’s a cool way to show people the culture and share community.” ■

2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow winners

Junior girls jingle: Nihale Soto, fifth; Nation Blackcrow, fourth; ***Ulali Quenelle, third; *Willow Squetimkia, second;** Raine Williams, first.

Junior girls fancy: Qwaneem Abrahamson, fifth; Sabrina James, fourth; Samari Scott, third; Lisa-Joy Rowan, second; Emma Eaglespeaker, first.

Junior girls traditional: Serene Scott, fifth; Shirleen Norwest, fourth; Blaire Williams, third; Emma Jenkins, second; Leona Norwest, first.

Junior boys grass: Lydia Norwest, fifth; Philip “PJ” Lloyd, fourth; Austen Miller, third; Elijah Raine-Goodstriker, second; Joziah Celestial, first.

Junior boys fancy: Luciano Reyes, fifth; Rodger Beyay, fourth; Emerson Treter, third; Timinah Ellenwood, second; Jaycen Llena, first.

Junior boys traditional: Kian Montgomery, fifth; Elijah Barney, fourth; Earl Lloyd, third; John Adams, second; Chimoqkeen Abrahamson, first.

Teen girls jingle: Satayvah Wilson, fifth; Zoey Brisbois, fourth; Abi Ford Kordatzky, third; Alexis Payer, second; Maddie Bird, first.

Teen girls fancy: Gabryela Snow, fifth; Kyla Miller, fourth; Dazha Joseph, third; Alani Barr, second; Nikiyah Longee, first.

Teen girls traditional: ***Marie Quenelle, fifth;** Aliesse Whitegrass, fourth; Willena Cleveland-Whitegrass, third; Candace Whiteplume; second; Diamond Say, first.

Teen boys grass: Jeryn Trujillo, fifth; Nathan Mezir, fourth; Tyler Peters, third; Willis James Tomeo, second; EJ Denny Villa, first.

Teen boys fancy: Keuna Fasthorse, fifth; Moses Walsey, fourth; William Walsey, third; Gareian McDonald, second; Alvin Rattlesnake, first.

Teen boys traditional: John M. Moses, fifth; Blake Lloyd, fourth; Naidyn Rattlesnake, third; Hunter Whiteplume, second; Lewis Allen, first.

Junior women’s jingle: Eartha Goodstriker, fifth; Ser’Rae Running Eagle, fourth; Leiloni Ellenwood, third; Rhiana Spoonhunter, second; Arianne Sheka, first.

Junior women’s fancy: Corina Limon, fifth; Claudia Suarez, fourth; Miriam Wesley, third; Valerie Adrian, second; Farrell Top Sky, first.

Junior women’s traditional: Denae Smith, fifth; Faith Goodstriker, fourth; Violet Whitegrass, third; Tera Ellenwood, second; Loreal Ellenwood, first.

Junior men’s grass: Zaric Raine, fifth; Inyan Growing Thunder, fourth; Hunter Street, third; Christopher Beebe, second; Miguel Herrera, first.

Junior men’s fancy: Apolla Johnson, fifth; Nakeezaka Jack, fourth; Liam Beebe, third; Donnatella Rowan, second; RJ Tveter, first.

Junior men’s traditional: Cetan Growing Thunder, fifth; Matthew Sheka Jr., fourth; Silas Martinez, third; Bryou Adams, second; Nataos Beebe, first.

Senior women’s jingle: Michelle Martinez, fifth; Nina Cattleman, fourth; Marcelia Cleveland-Whitegrass, third; Anika Top of the Sky, second; Bridget Eaglespeaker, first.

Senior women’s fancy: Nikonane Kanuho, fifth; Michelle Bobadilla, fourth; Denelle Stanley, third; Roseanne Greene, second; Crystalena Pacheco, first.

Senior women’s traditional: ***Leah Brisbois, fifth;** Roberta Smith, fourth; Celeste Osife, third; Sophia Thurman, second; Miranda Thompson, first.

Senior men’s grass: Grover Topaum, fifth; ***Jordan Mercier, fourth;** Tameem Sarwary, third; Victor Harry, second; Gary Villa, first.

Senior men’s fancy: Gary Smith, fifth; Jamie Ward, fourth; Tyson Draper, third; Stan Whiteman, second; Gary Olney, first.

Senior men’s traditional: Kyle Iron Lightning, fifth; Nakia Williamson, fourth; George Meninick Jr., third; Andrew Tewawina, second; Saul Jurado, first.

Golden age women: Ervanna Little Eagle, fifth; Love Richardson Williams, fourth; Tina Aquash, third; Cece Walsey-Beyay, second; Henrietta McGurk, first.

Golden age men: Syndey John, fifth; Telly Raine, fourth; Reginald Walsey, third; Carlos Calica, second; Jeff Downing, first.

Elder women: Linda Meanus, fifth; Wilma “Willie” Wansise, fourth; Wilma Buck, third; Audrey Olney, second; Melinda Good Will, first.

Elder men: Wayne Smartlowit, fifth; Peter Jo Olney, fourth; James Alan Smith, third; Wilson Totas, second; Greg Red Elk, first.

Men’s chicken: Sage Lone Bear, fifth; Hashkai Bird, fourth; Colin Raine, third; Jordan Yazzie, second; Shotae Treter, first.

Dance specials

Men’s fancy: Nakeezaka Jack, fourth; Stanley Whiteman, third; Roger Tveter, second; Liam Beebe, first.

Women’s fancy: Claudia Suarez, fourth; Valerie Adrian, third; Farrell Top Sky, second; Miriam Wesley, first.

Luck of the draw: Shotae Tveter, second; Miriam Wesley, first.

Drums: Bad Nation, fifth; Bad War Cloud, fourth; Little Bear, third; Mile Post 30, second; Maskwaki Nation, first.

Stick game winners

Main tournament: Duke Ellingson, third; Melvin Brisbois, second; Destiny Malt, first.

Three-man tournament: Julia Heath, second; Michael Fast Buffalo Horse, first.

Youth tournament: Drake Brisbois, third; Aiden McGill, second; Sharmiah Brisbois, first.

**Denotes Grand Ronde Tribal member winner. Disclaimer: Tribal affiliation was not listed for dancers on the payout form, so some Tribal member winners may not have the asterisk before their name.*



Photo by Alexander Bliven

Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Tribal member Casandra Hanson watches attendees from her booth during the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14.

Powwow vendors, each with their own stories

By Alexander Bliven

Smoke Signals intern

During the 2026 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow, vendors of all types dotted the uyxat Powwow Grounds, offering attendees everything from handcrafted beadwork and clothing to artwork, books and other goods.

For the vendors, selling their work provides more than an opportunity to make sales. It offers a way to share their creativity, connect with others, represent their cultures and carry Indigenous stories forward.

One of the many people who set up a booth at the powwow was Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy.

Kennedy offered handcrafted beadwork including purses, bags, earrings and necklaces. She observed that over the years, the powwow has continued to grow and welcome people from all over to Grand Ronde.

"I remember when we used to have the powwow right in front of governance. We had 10,000 people there at one point," she said. "I always look back to that and think about how many there were. Of course, there were not that many vendors then. I see a lot of Tribal members have vending booths [now] and that makes my heart happy."

Kennedy said she enjoys seeing those from different Tribal communities come to the powwow.

"The furthest away that I talked

to were Ho-Chunk," she said, noting that she also had met people from South Dakota, Montana, Washington and elsewhere in Oregon.

Near her was CC&K 4YOU, a family business operated by Grand Ronde Tribal member Crystal Lanier, her husband and daughter. The booth offered a variety of goods, including jewelry, handmade bracelets, candles, children's items and other products.

Lanier, who has participated as a vendor for three years, said she also sells at the Friday Marketplace at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center, as well as other events throughout the Salem-Albany area.

For Lanier, vending provides an opportunity to work with her family while connecting with the community.

"I enjoy it very much and my daughter enjoys participating," she said. "We love it; being a part of the community. It lets us meet new people and engage in our culture."

For Casandra Hanson, the powwow was a first-time opportunity to share books written exclusively by Indigenous authors through her business, Sahaptin Stories.

Hanson, a member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, said her mission is to "bring Indigenous stories to life and make sure that our stories are heard in mainstream media."

Hanson said Sahaptin Stories is expanding and plans to open a

bookstore in Portland in late September.

"I am an avid reader and probably a book hoarder, so this is my dream job," she said with a chuckle.

At another booth, Ché Finch represented Burial Ground Society, which he described as an "intertribal collective of artists, musicians, filmmakers and creatives."

The collective includes artists from Tribes across the United States.

Finch, a hip-hop artist who is Nez Perce and Paiute, sold Burial Ground Society apparel, patches, stickers, handmade items and an album of his own music. This was the group's fourth year vending at the powwow.

"We always love to come here, we always see a lot of familiar faces," he said. "We get to meet a lot of new people from a lot of different places, so it's a wonderful place to gather and be here."

Finch said the collective's artists draw from their respective cultures and backgrounds in their work.

"Because we are an intertribal collective, everyone brings a little bit of their own culture and their own significance," he said. "When it comes to what we do, we're all very proud of our Indigenous heritage and culture and so we really try to push that out through our art."

Nestled in a busier stretch of vendors near the arena was Wild Blackberry Moccs, operated by Grand Ronde Tribal members and

sisters, Kayla Gottfried and Kara Helsel.

Present for its third time at the powwow, the booth featured Helsel's beadwork and Gottfried's leather and Pendleton goods, including pouches, purses and moccasins.

Both sisters said they enjoy the creative aspects of their crafts.

"I personally love being creative," Helsel said. "I haven't always thought of myself as a creative person but when I started sewing, I realized that I was."

Gottfried noted she also loves to create something that another person can take home and appreciate.

For Helsel, beading became a way to connect with her late aunt, who had also been a beader.

"She used to be a beader and I would sit and watch her bead and so when she passed away, I started beading," Helsel said through tears. "It's something I really love and enjoy and I wish that she were still here to be able to see me do this as well."

Gottfried said she also finds enjoyment in seeing the dancers prepare for grand entry near their booth.

"We always hang up a mirror and they come and check their outfits and their hair and I just love being able to see all the dancers," she said.

The sisters said they are proud to represent the Tribe through their work and look forward to returning each year. ■

Grand Ronde Royalty Pageant



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Little Miss Grand Ronde contestant Safia Ben El Aali introduces herself during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Little Miss Grand Ronde contestant Amira Ben El Aali introduces herself during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Junior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Graciela Ornelas introduces herself during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Senior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Leloo Quenelle introduces herself during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Junior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Ulali Quenelle introduces herself during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Junior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Graciela Ornelas dances during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Little Miss Grand Ronde contestant Amira Ben El Aali dances during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Little Miss Grand Ronde contestant Safia Ben El Aali dances during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Senior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Leloo Quenelle dances during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Junior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Ulali Quenelle dances during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Tiny Tot contestants, clockwise from left, Kova Speer, Josie Craig, Zoey Crawley and Briar Ashley, dance during the royalty pageant in the Governance Center Atrium Friday, Aug. 14.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo

2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Senior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Leloo Quenelle is crowned Senior Miss Grand Ronde Queen during the Grand Ronde Royalty coronation at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Junior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Ulali Quenelle, left, is named Junior Miss Grand Ronde Queen, as Junior Miss Grand Ronde contestant Graciela Ornelas looks on, during the Grand Ronde Royalty coronation at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14. Ornelas was named Junior Miss Princess.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Little Miss Grand Ronde contestant Safia Ben El Aali, left, is hugged by her sister, Little Miss contestant Amira Ben El Aali, after Safia was crowned Little Miss Grand Ronde Queen during the Grand Ronde Royalty coronation at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14. Amira was named Little Miss Princess.



2026-27 Grand Ronde Royalty Tiny Tot Princesses, from left, Josie Craig, Briar Ashley, Kova Speer and Zoey Crawley were introduced during the Grand Ronde Royalty coronation at uyxat Powwow Grounds Friday, Aug. 14.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Grand Ronde hosts Education Summit

By Alexander Bliven
& Katherine Warren

Smoke Signals staff

The Grand Ronde Education Summit returned again to the Spirit Mountain Casino's Event Center Friday, Aug. 21, bringing approximately 200 educators together to learn about the history, culture and educational resources of the Tribe.

Now in its ninth year, the summit seeks to provide educators with knowledge and resources about the Tribe that can be incorporated into classrooms.

Tribal Education Department Manager Angela Fasana welcomed educators to the summit and expressed gratitude for the work they do to positively affect their students.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier then gave a welcoming speech, followed by invocation from Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George.

"I am a product of our Tribe's Education Department," Mercier said. "I went to college and law school and emerged from both with virtually no debt."

Mercier said his journey through higher education would have been much more difficult without the Tribe's education program and emphasized that educators may not immediately see the effect they have on their students.

"You really don't know the impact of (education) until years later," he said. "So, I admire what you guys do."

Mercier also discussed the underrepresentation of Tribal people in several professions and the importance of Native people and educators to help create opportunities for future generations.

"Know that the impact that you have is probably a lot bigger than you think it is," he told educators.

Tribal Curriculum Coach Cassie De Turk welcomed attendees with a brief lesson on introducing themselves in Chinuk Wawa and expressed the Education Committee's excitement about the speakers scheduled throughout the day.

The theme of this year's summit was "Rooted in Community, Growing through Education." Attendees were asked to reflect on how Indigenous perspectives could be woven throughout the school year, how schools could create spaces for Indigenous students to see themselves and their histories reflected, and what practices educators could begin or strengthen after attending the summit.

This year's keynote speaker was author, illustrator and Tribal member Steph Littlebird. Littlebird published the picture book "My Powerful Hair" in 2023, which received the national Carter G. Woodson Social Studies Award the following year. She also published "You Are the Land" in February, which was named a top 10 picture book of 2026 by the website Goodreads.



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member and author and illustrator Steph Littlebird gives the keynote speech at the beginning of the 2026 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Education Summit at Spirit Mountain Casino's Event Center Friday, Aug. 21.



Tribal member Jenny Sanchez, second from left, picks out a poster that has weather words in Chinuk Wawa during the "Chinuk Wawa Mini Lesson and Sign Making" breakout session during the 2026 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Education Summit at Spirit Mountain Casino's Event Center Friday, Aug. 21. Tribal Secondary Education Teacher Zoey Holsclaw was the presenter for the session.

Littlebird discussed the importance of her Indigenous background in her work.

"I am someone who shares the stories of our community, shares the values of our community," she said. "And I feel like I am living my dream in getting to do that, getting to be part of the people who are rebirthing our culture as opposed to my ancestors who had to watch its destruction."

Littlebird said that with the privilege of being able to share those stories comes a responsibility to make Indigenous experiences be heard.

"I recognize how privileged I am to be doing the work that I do and so with that privilege comes a great amount of responsibility to tell our stories and to make the invisible visible, because we have been invisible for so long," she said.

Littlebird said she had multiple educators throughout her schooling who helped her develop a sense of self and purpose.

"You guys are my favorite people to talk to because ... you're literally saving lives," she said. "I'm a testament to that."

Following the opening activities, educators dispersed into breakout sessions held throughout the morning and afternoon.

Morning sessions included a Chinuk Wawa mini lesson and sign-making panel, a study of historical records that students could use to learn about their own family histories and connect them to classroom topics, an exploration of how 3D printing can be used for practical solutions, presentations

Amanda Mercier and Cultural Center Specialist Trudy Sylvia, Ceded Lands Manager Michael Karnosh, K-5 Academic Coach George Neujahr, Cultural Protection Specialist Chris Bailey, American Museum of Natural History Interns Ekias Sabin and Tidus Sabin, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coordinator Matt Bucknell, the Education Committee and more.

Guest presenters included Oregon Department of Education Native American Student Success Coordinator Renée Roman Nose, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma member Jen Anderson and American Museum of Natural History staff Maria Sawiris and Albeliza Perez.

Smoke Signals staff attended the following sessions:

3D printing

During Alec Mercier's 3D printing session, he emphasized that technology could be used as a practical tool to solve everyday problems.

"We had a popcorn machine in our office and the door broke," he said. "And so I took the part, measured it, modeled it and printed it several times and I fixed the door."

Mercier displayed several examples of items he printed including a shelf he designed for webcams used by the Tribe, door stops, phone cradles, fidget toys, action figures, a flute, building models and replicas of dinosaur skulls.

During the session, Mercier also printed charging-port cleaners and gave them to attendees.

Attendees were very engaged and said 3D printing is always popular with their students.

Mercier explained that different materials can be used for 3D printing and displayed a model made from a corn-based material.

"This was made with a corn-based material and so it will degrade over time," he said. "High heat or water will eventually melt it. And that's kind of why I like printing with it because it's cheaper and will actually break down over time."

Philanthropy and Hatfield Fellowship

This session was presented by Spirit Mountain Community Fund Program Coordinator Angela Schlappie, who discussed the history of the Community Fund and what its mission involves. Schlappie went over the qualifications to apply for a grant, which is funded by 6% of the revenue of Spirit Mountain Casino.

The Community Fund offers both large and small grants for several different categories such as effective education for youth, environmental, health, food security/food sovereignty, housing/homeless, mental health, and pre/post-natal care.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, government agencies in Lane, Polk, Tillamook, and Yamhill counties, or one of the nine federally recognized Tribes of Oregon may all apply for the grants.

Tribal Council Member/ Spirit

**See EDUCATION
continued on page 19**

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,” 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. ■

Smoke Signals staff attended several break out sessions

EDUCATION continued from page 18

Mountain Community Fund Board of Trustees Vice-Chair Kathleen George discussed the Hatfield Fellowship.

“We’ve had 26 fellowships with the first one being (current) Tribal Council member Pete Wakeland,” she said.

George noted that the application for the 2027-28 Hatfield Fellowship opens March 1 and closes April 30.

For more information about the grant process or Hatfield Fellowship, visit thecommunityfund.com or email info@thecommunityfund.com.

American Indian/Alaska Native Student Success Plan

Oregon Department of Education Native American Student Success Coordinator Renée Roman Nose discussed the American Indian/Alaska Native Student Success Plan for the 2025-30 school years.

Nose went over the five main goals that are in the plan, which are: Championing Tribal languages by uplifting and amplifying Tribal language revitalization efforts, addressing inequity in Native student data by addressing disparate identification of Native students in special education, pursuing Native excellence through strengthening collaboration with Tribes and families to support early literacy, cultivating holistic systems of support by honoring educational sovereignty through Tribal consultation and lastly, centering culturally responsive approaches such as providing support to educators to successfully implement Tribal history/shared history lesson plans.

For more information about the AIANSSP plan, visit www.oregon.gov/ode or email renee.romannose@ode.oregon.gov

Cultivating Tribal social emotional learning opportunities

Tribal Social Emotional Learning Specialist Amanda Mercier discussed cultivating a Tribal aspect to social emotional learning.

“It’s not fair to them (children) to cut them off from evidence-based

interventions that have high effectiveness that could support them,” she said. “They should have an opportunity for that and we need to provide a space for that.”

Mercier shared that she recently went on canoe journey to provide social emotional learning opportunities and a safe quiet spot when the world was getting to be too much for the kids. She had noise canceling headphones and some sensory toys to play with. They had a tent area for the kids and there were adults who were also enthusiastic about that option, so Mercier is exploring it for next year.

Decolonizing behavior support

Amanda Mercier’s final session was on decolonizing behavior support for Native students. She went over some statistics and graphs showing how many students that are Native American/Alaska Native are getting put on a modified diploma track more often than their peers of other races, as well as how Native students are missing more school days compared to their peers.

Mercier also showed a video about boarding schools in North America and had a discussion with the audience about whether they think or believe that this is still affecting the Native culture.

An audience member spoke about how she had a grandfather and other relatives who attended the Chemawa Indian Boarding School in Salem, and how their experiences have affected the way some of her family looks at education.

Mercier ended the session with the audience breaking up into three groups and giving a situation in a classroom. The groups had to come up with a solution and present it to everyone.

In conclusion of the summit, De Turk gave a closing statement and did the final raffle drawings.

“As we come to the end of our 2026 Education Summit, I want you all to think about today and the theme, ‘Rooted in Community, Growing through Education,’ that education isn’t something that we do alone.” ■



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

Vote For No More Than Three (3)

DENISE HARVEY

VALERIA ATANACIO

PAMALA WARREN-CHASE

CHRISTOPHER BAILEY

LISA MARLENE LENO

MATTHEW HALLER

ADVISORY QUESTIONS

QUESTION #1

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. A

Building a mix of income-based and market-rate housing. B

Expanding homeownership opportunities (e.g., down-payment help, rent-to-own). C

All priorities are equally important. D

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. A

Building a mix of income-based and market-rate housing. B

Expanding homeownership opportunities (e.g., down-payment help, rent-to-own). C

None / No second priority. D



CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
TRIBAL COUNCIL ELECTION
SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

ARE YOU A CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE TRIBAL VETERAN?

Contact the Tribal Veterans Service Office (TVSO)

To Add Your Name:

To the email list

To the mail out list

To the t-shirt list

To Recieve:

Benefits information & updates

Event invitations

Veteran recognitions

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

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

CTGRtribaIVSO@GrandRonde.Org

TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE



On Fridays you will receive a message about mental health, a social emotional tip or a simple quote or message of encouragement.

Text JOIN to
(971) 318-3459



Back to school day



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Grand Ronde Tribal Police Sgt. Rod McAllister hands Torrie Wisler, 5, a pencil as she arrives for her first day of kindergarten at Willamina Elementary School Tuesday, Aug. 25. Staff from the Tribal police, Social Services and Education departments were at the complex to welcome elementary, middle and high school students to the first day of school.



MIND READERS

Brain Health & Story Circle

JOIN US
1st & 3rd Tuesdays

10:00 - 11:30 AM
or
3:30 - 5:00 PM

CHACHALU GYM
8720 Grand Ronde Rd
Grand Ronde, OR

RSVP
Community Health
503-879-2078

A welcome gathering focused on brain health, memory, connections, books, and shared experiences.

Spouses, care providers, family members, and individuals experiencing memory changes are welcome - including new participants.

**BRAIN HEALTH**

**FREE BOOKS**
(for CTGR members)

**CONVERSATION**

**COMMUNITY**

*The Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided financial support for this project, and work associated with the Brain Health Program. The award provided 100% of total costs associated with this handbook. The contents are those of the author. They may not reflect the policies of IHS, HHS, or the U.S. Government.

A MARJORIE ELAINE LABONTE ROBERTSON LEGACY EVENT
CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS EXCELLENCE
IN MUSIC, FOOD, & ART

SEVENTH GENERATION

CULTURE FEST 2026

SAT SEPT 5TH 12PM - 10PM

2505 NE PACIFIC ST
PORTLAND OR

MzShellz • Lobotomy • Sho Rilla
Stewie G • Mista Chief • YNG Native
Razaman • Thompson Family Fancy Dancers + More

LIVE MUSIC • DANCERS • SPEAKERS
CULTURAL CRAFTS & FOOD VENDORS
FREE ADMISSION • ALL ARE WELCOME
FOR INFO PLEASE CONTACT: PILCHAKCHAK@GMAIL.COM



Paid ad



West Valley Veterans Memorial Application

Deadline is January 15, 2027

Name (as desired on memorial):		DOB:	
Address:		City:	State: Zip:
Phone:		Gender: Male/Female (Circle)	
Rank:	Branch:	Honorable: Yes/No (Circle)	
DOE:	Place of entry:		
DOS:	Place of seperation:		
Deceased: Yes/No (Circle)		Place of burial:	
CTGR Tribal: Yes/No (Circle)		If Tribal, Roll#	

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

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

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

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. ■

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

Vote for

Pamala Warren-Chase

2026 Tribal Council

Paid political ad

TRIBAL COURT

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 9, 2026.**

Please Submit Materials to:
Shawn Branson, Court Administrator
shawn.branson@grandronde.org
9615 Grand Ronde Road
Grand Ronde, OR 97347

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

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



CTGR EMPLOYMENT

Position Title	Grade	Min. Start Wage	Max Start Wage	Closing Date
Accounting Clerk	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	08/24/2026
Advocate	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	08/17/2026
After-Care Educator – Early Childhood Education	6	\$20.75/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	08/31/2026
Asset Inventory Specialist	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	Until Filled
Barista-Trainee – Limited Duration	4	\$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
Certified Medical Assistant – Health and Wellness	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	08/24/2026
College Intern/Aide – Early Childhood Education	2	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.26/hr.	08/24/2026
ERSEA – Data Coordinator	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	08/24/2026
Financial Wellness Coordinator	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Firefighter/Paramedic	11	\$68,001.85/yr.	\$87,602.40/yr.	08/24/2026
Help Desk Technician	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	08/24/2026
Legal Assistant	11	\$32.74/hr.	\$42.16/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
Maintenance Technician – Facilities	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	8/31/2026
Patient Insurance & Eligibility Specialist	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	08/31/2026
Peer Support Specialist (Male) – Behavioral Health	9	\$27.05/hr.	\$34.95/hr.	08/24/2026
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
Radiologic Technologist	10	\$29.75/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Senior Dental Assistant	9	\$27.05/hr.	\$34.95/hr.	Until Filled
Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor – Part Time	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	Until Filled
Tribal Security Officer – Grave Shift Only	5	\$19.86/hr.	\$24.97/hr.	08/17/2026
Temporary Pool	2	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	
Clinic Manager – Salem Detox – GCR	14	\$90,630.26/yr.	\$116,255.21/yr.	Until Filled
Cook – Sheridan – Weekends Only	5	\$18.96/hr.	\$24.67/hr.	08/31/2026
Licensed Practical Nurse - Salem Detox - GCR	12	\$36.01/hr.	\$46.31/hr.	Until Filled
Licensed Practical Nurse-GTP-GCR-Salem	12	\$36.01/hr.	\$46.31/hr.	08/31/2026
Mental Health Counselor – Sheridan - GCR	12	\$74,901.04/yr.	\$96,316.53/yr.	Until Filled
Millieu Safety Technician (In-House) Salem – GCR	6	\$20.76/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	08/24/2026
Millieu Safety Technician - Portland- GCR	6	\$20.76/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	Until Filled
Physician Assistant – Salem OTP - GCR	20	\$151,691.92/yr.	\$205,141.88/yr.	Until Filled
Substance Use Disorder Therapist – Salem OTP - GCR	10	\$61,901.69/yr.	\$79,848.88/yr.	Until Filled

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.



SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO CAREERS

POSTING TITLE	CLOSE DATE	WAGE/SALARY
Assistant Food and Beverage Manager	8/27/26	\$48,329.22/yr. DOE
Barista (*Part-Time)	8/27/26	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Bartender	8/27/26	\$16.50/hr. + Tips
Chef de Cuisine- Amore	8/27/26	\$63,586.43/yr. DOE
Hotel Bell Staff (*Part-Time)	8/27/26	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Hotel Front Desk Clerk	8/27/26	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Mountain View Sports Bar Waitstaff (*Part-Time)	8/27/26	\$15.55/hr. + Tips
Assistant Banquet Manager	Until Filled	\$48,329.22/yr. DOE
Baker	Until Filled	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Cook (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Guest Safety Specialist I	Until Filled	\$18.29/hr.
Guest Safety Specialist II	Until Filled	\$18.55/hr.
Guest Services Lead	Until Filled	\$18.55/hr. DOE
Host/Hostess Cashier (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Hotel Room Attendant (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Pastry Chef	Until Filled	DOE
Table Games Dealer – Multi-Game (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$15.55/hr. + Tips
Warehouse Clerk	Until Filled	\$18.55/hr. DOE

\$1,000 Hire-On Bonus All Positions

\$500 Referral Bonus SMC & CTGR Employees

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

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

✓ SMGI 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.

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. ■

ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE BECAUSE I AM READY TO WORK FOR YOU.



taxayam Grand Ronde Tribal Members!

Leadership has never been about a title for me. It is about how we show up. I have built my life around showing up for our people—doing the work, asking hard questions, bringing people together, and following through. My experience has taught me how to navigate complex systems while staying grounded in what matters most:

Our Tribal Members. Our families, Our Future Generations.

I am ready to bring that same work ethic, courage, accountability, and care to Tribal Council. I am not seeking a title. I am seeking the opportunity to serve. To listen. To communicate. To ask the questions that need to be asked. And to work hard for our membership every day.

If you believe Grand Ronde is ready for engaged leadership, stronger communication, and a representative who will show up and do the work, I humbly ask for your vote. Your vote is your voice. Let's build a stronger Grand Ronde together.

We Are The Future Ancestors.
www.VoteValeria.com | (971)-209-5406 | valeria.atanacio@gmail.com



Paid political ad

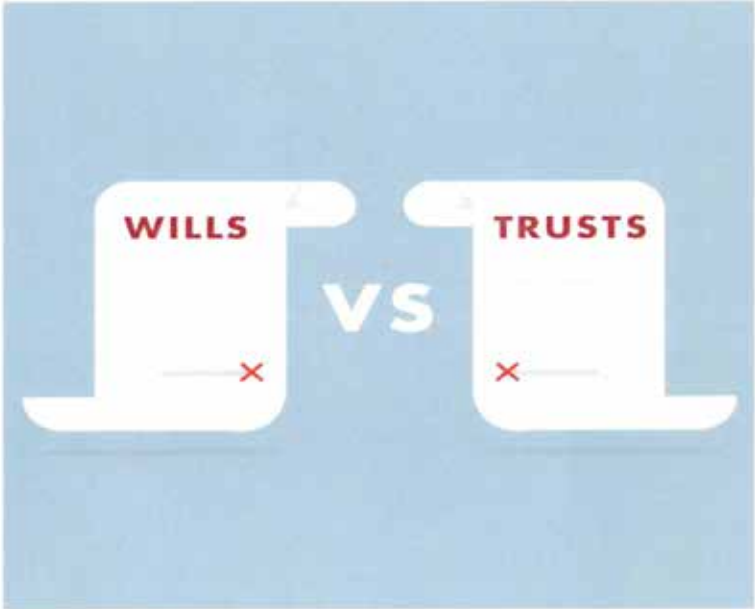


TEACH

our children
our stories

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

ATTENTION TRIBAL ELDERS!!



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.

2026 / 2027

LIHEAP

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

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

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

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

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

>>> JOIN OUR <<<
TEAM

ADULT FOSTER CARE

WE ARE CURRENTLY HIRING:

 CARE GIVERS
FULL TIME & PART TIME
WAGE RANGE: \$22.36-\$35.65

 MEDICATION AIDE
FULL TIME
WAGE RANGE: \$22.36-\$35.65



WE OFFER:

Competitive Pay

Paid Time Off

Training Provided

Supportive Team Environment

Apply Today!

503.879.2109
EmploymentTeam@grandronde.org

For more information and to apply scan the QR Code



Come be a part of Our Family!

Great Circle Recovery has updated hours, mobile dosing services

Great Circle Recovery Clinic has updated hours for both its Portland and Salem locations. Open hours are 6 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday to Friday and 7 a.m. to noon Saturday. The clinic is closed on Sunday.

Additionally, for those who cannot make it to the clinic, there are mobile dosing services. These are offered in Grand Ronde, behind the veterans services building in the parking lot, from 8 a.m. to noon Monday to Friday, and from 8 a.m. to noon Monday to Friday at First Baptist Church, 125 SE Cows St., McMinnville.

Great Circle Recovery offers whole person care and medications for opioid use disorder. The Salem office is located at 1011 Commercial St., and the Portland office is located at 3580 SE 82nd Ave.

For more information, call 503-983-9900 (Salem) or 971-339-9240 (Portland). ■

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.



Service offered at the Cheryle A. Kennedy Public Health Building





Registered Dietitian Nutritionist
Becky Johnson

Becky Johnson is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist able to work one-on-one with any HWC-eligible patient at the Cheryle Kennedy Public Health Building. Becky has been licensed as a dietitian since 2019 after completing a Master of Science in Human Nutrition degree at Oregon Health & Science University and dietetic internship with the Veterans Administration Portland Health Care System. Becky has previously work as a dietitian and nutrition services manager at Samaritan North Lincoln Hospital in Lincoln City and dietitian and health education manager with the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians in Canyonville. She enjoys working with individuals of all ages, using the power of food and nutrition to create personalized eating plans and set goals to improve or maintain health. This includes both managing chronic health conditions (such as chronic kidney disease, heart disease, food allergies/intolerances or digestive problems) or promoting optimum nutrition at different life stages (such as early childhood, youth athletes, pregnancy, or older adulthood).

Contact Details

For appointments contact the Public Health Department front desk at 503-879-6701 OR contact Becky directly at 503-879-6711 or Becky.Johnson@grandronde.org.

YOUR AMAZING BRAIN

FOUR WEEKS. FOUR EXPERIENCES. ONE HEALTHIER BRAIN

PLUS: WALK WITH US ON SEPT. 27TH!

WEEK 1 * SEPT 2

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

Learn to draw a blue jay in pastels with artist Shelly M. Perfect for all skill levels. Lunch is provided!

10:00-2:00PM • CHERYLE A KENNEDY PUBLIC HEALTH BUILDING

WEEK 2 * SEPT 9

BRAIN POWER JEOPARDY

Play brain health Jeopardy. Test your knowledge. Learn without the lecture. Have fun individually or as a group. Win prizes!

12:30-1:30 PM • EAC

WEEK 3 * SEPT 16

BRAIN BEATS

Join us for a brain boosting rhythm challenge! Grab a boomwhacker tube, follow your color, and whack your way through familiar songs, laughing all the way. No musical experience required.

12:30-1:30 PM • EAC

WEEK 4 * SEPT 30

BRAIN & BODY IN BALANCE

Discover how gentle Tai Chi movements can support balance, coordination, and brain health. Participate standing or seated. No experience needed.

12:30-1:30 PM • EAC

BONUS

WALK WITH US TO END ALZHEIMER'S ON SEPT. 27TH

SCAN FOR WALK DETAILS

CONNECT * COLLECT * WIN

GRAND PRIZE DRAWING

ATTEND EACH WEEKLY EVENT TO EARN 1 TICKET TOWARD OUR GRAND PRIZE DRAWING. JOINING THE WALK EARN YOU 5!

CONTACT COMMUNITY HEALTH FOR MORE DETAILS 503-879-2078

*The Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services (IHS) provided financial support for this project, and work associated with the Brain Health Program. The award provided 100% of total costs associated with this booklet. The contents are those of the author. They may not reflect the policies of IHS, HHS, or the U.S. Government.



SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

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

ALL ITEMS NOW RESTOCKED • \$10 STANDARD SHIPPING



NAVY ZIP-UP:
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



TEAL ZIP-UP:
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



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FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



BLACK ZIP-UP:
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



BLACK PULL-OVER:
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



NAVY T-SHIRT:
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC



TEAL T-SHIRT:
FRONT GRAPHIC



GRAY T-SHIRT:
FRONT GRAPHIC



BLACK T-SHIRT:
FRONT GRAPHIC



BLACK T-SHIRT:
FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC

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BEANIES • PATCHES • STICKERS • FREE IN-PERSON PICKUP AVAILABLE

Checks, cash or money orders only please: Make payable to Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Memo: Editorial Board
Include shipping fee and please mail to: Smoke Signals Publications Dept., 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347

\$10 SHIPPING		SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	X-LARGE	2X-LARGE	3X-LARGE	4X-LARGE
PULL OVER HOODIE (BLACK) \$45								
ZIP-UP HOODIE (BLACK) \$45								Not Available
ZIP-UP HOODIE (GRAY) \$45								Not Available
ZIP-UP HOODIE (TEAL) \$45								Not Available
ZIP-UP HOODIE (NAVY) \$45								Not Available
T-SHIRT (BLACK)	FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC \$20							
T-SHIRT (BLACK)	FRONT GRAPHIC \$20							
T-SHIRT (GRAY)	FRONT GRAPHIC \$20							
T-SHIRT (TEAL)	FRONT GRAPHIC \$20							
T-SHIRT (NAVY)	FRONT & BACK GRAPHIC \$20							Not Available

TRUCKER CAP \$15

BEANIES \$15

PATCHES \$5

STICKERS \$1

SHIPPING \$10

Name:

E-mail:

Address:

Phone: