



MMIP nonprofit
Ampkwa Advocacy
holds dinner — pg. 6

FEBRUARY 15, 2025



SMOKE SIGNALS

UMPQUA · MOLALLA · ROGUE RIVER · KALAPUYA · CHASTA

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

Fire rips through tumwata village property again

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

OREGON CITY — Clackamas Fire District firefighters spent hours during the morning of Thursday, Jan. 30, battling a large blaze at the former Blue Heron Paper Mill in Oregon City that closed the highway in both directions from Tumwater Drive to South End Road. All train service was paused as well.

The 3-alarm fire was declared contained later that morning and continued smoldering for several more hours. The City of West Linn said on its Facebook page that a hazmat team was called in to assess air quality.

By midday Thursday, flames were no longer visible, but smoke was still rising and firefighters continued

to direct water at the smoldering remains. Onlookers gathered on the McLoughlin Promenade, which overlooks the former mill, taking pictures while television crews remained onsite, reporting.

On Friday, Jan. 31, the Tribe issued an updated statement on Facebook, noting that the fire was still active.

“To fully extinguish the fire, the buildings will need to be demolished,” it said. “This decision has been made for safety reasons, as there is no safe way to attack the fire from the roof or inside the structure. Fire suppression will occur during the demolition process to ensure the fire is fully extinguished.”

See FIRE
continued on page 9



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

A Clackamas Fire District firefighter applies water to extinguish a blaze at the Tribe’s tumwata village property, the former Blue Heron Paper Mill, in Oregon City on Thursday, Jan. 30. By midday Thursday, flames were no longer visible. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

TO SEE MORE PHOTOS AND VIDEO

@SmokeSignalsCTGR @ctgrsmokesignals @SmokeSignalsCTGR

Book intended to help children face being different

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

Once upon a time, in a land that was not far away at all, but right here in the Pacific Northwest, there lived a people who were free to be entirely themselves – men, women, Two-Spirit, non-binary, whomever and however they might be.

But times changed and colonialism brought in another view – that gender is not a many-splendored thing, but inescapably binary. By the time Tribal Elder Qahir-beejee Peco (Lorraine Barton) was growing up, to be identified by society as a girl was to be shut out of most things that interested them such as drumming, carving and

participating in sports.

“I always thought there was something wrong with me,” Peco said. “On another level, I was very happy not to be like everybody else. I didn’t like what ‘typical girls’ liked; to me, it was boring and dumb. ... but I was always getting the message that, ‘At best, you’re going to outgrow this. At worst, there’s something wrong with you.’”

Peco, who identifies as gender-fluid and non-binary, has spent much of their life working to prevent other children from feeling the

See BOOK
continued on page 10



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Qahir-beejee Peco (Lorraine Barton) wrote “Beat the Drum” with longtime friend and colleague Katie Kissinger.

Salem City Council postpones casino MOU until further notice

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

SALEM — The Salem City Council has postponed an agreement it was considering for how to provide city services to a proposed new casino in Salem until it has more information.

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz is seeking to build an off-reservation, class III casino in north Salem,

to supplement income from the Chinook Winds Casino in Lincoln City. The endeavor is opposed by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, which fears it would siphon off customers and staff from Spirit Mountain Casino.

The casino has not been approved by the Department of Interior, despite fears sparked late last year when the department signed

the record of decision to approve an off-reservation casino for the Coquille Indian Tribe in Medford.

Grand Ronde also opposed that casino, stating that it violated the longstanding “one casino per Tribe,” policy in Oregon.

On Monday, Jan. 27, the City Council was considering a proposed memorandum of understanding intended to establish guidelines

for providing city services to Siletz-owned land within the city, where the casino would be located if built. It would also establish payments to the city from the Tribe.

The council’s memo from City Attorney Dan Atchison noted that the vote, “does not establish or

See MOU
continued on page 5

General Council meeting
11 a.m. Sunday, March 2
Tribal Council Chambers
Tribal members can participate remotely via Zoom and in-person attendance. Call 800-422-0232 for more information.

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday meetings

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, Feb. 19.....	4 p.m.
Wednesday, March 5.....	4 p.m.

Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed. In-person attendance in Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom.

Inclement weather alert!

Please be sure to call the Health & Wellness Center before traveling in to appointments at the clinic during inclement weather. Health & Wellness Center staff will make every attempt to call patients during closures. Also, sign up for emergency notifications about Tribal campus closures on the Tribal website at www.grandronde.org or follow the Tribe's primary page on Facebook. ■



The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
OFFSITE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETINGS


Sunday, April 6

Lane Community College Longhouse
 4000 E. 30th Ave.
 Eugene, OR 97405

Followed by
Community Input Meeting.

www.grandronde.org

Ad by Samuel Briggs III



CTGR Member Services

Requests for Descendancy Options

1. Descendancy letter (no DNA testing)

2. Certificate of Descendancy (DNA testing required)

Process:
 Submit completed application (digital signatures are not accepted) along with a copy of an original state certified birth certificate (we cannot accept copies) and proof of payment for the DNA from the Finance Department. Once application is received, Enrollment Office staff will process and setup the DNA appointment.

DNA at the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center: Cost of DNA testing is \$50 and you must pre-register with the clinic prior to your appointment. To pre-register, contact Ashley Stonebrink at 503-879-1325 or Stacy Pond-Bissonette at 503-879-2096.

To request an application or if you have any questions, contact the following:
Memberservices@grandronde.org

Enrollment staff:
 Tristin Armstrong 503-879-1619, Tristin.armstrong@grandronde.org
 Nick Labonte 503-879-2490, Nick.labonte@grandronde.org

Please send completed applications to:
 The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
 Attn: Enrollment Office
 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

smok signalz

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X (Formerly Twitter): [CTGRsmoksignalz](https://twitter.com/CTGRsmoksignalz)
www.facebook.com/SmokeSignalsCTGR/
www.youtube.com/c/SmokeSignalsChannel

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE	MEMBERS OF:
Thursday, Feb. 20	Mar. 1	Indigenous Journalists Association
Thursday, Mar. 6	Mar. 15	Oregon Newspaper Publishers Assoc.
Thursday, Mar. 20	Apr. 1	2022 IJA General Excellence
Friday, Apr. 4	Apr. 15	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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IN THE FUTURE



(k^hapa atqi)

makwst-mun (February)

- Monday, Feb. 17 – Tribal offices closed in observance of Tribal Chiefs' Day.
- UPDATED:** Wednesday, Feb. 19 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.
- Friday, Feb. 28 – Native Youth Wellness Day, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Tribal gym, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-1471.
- Friday, Feb. 28 – 20th annual Agency Creek Round Dance, 5 p.m. pipe ceremony, 6 p.m. traditional meal, 7 p.m. Round Dance, Tribal gym, 9615 Grand Ronde Road.

᠎un-mun (March)

- Saturday, March 1 – 20th annual Agency Creek Round Dance, 6 p.m. meal, 7 p.m. Round Dance, Tribal gym, 9615 Grand Ronde Road.
- Sunday, March 2 – General Council meeting, 11 a.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.
- Wednesday, March 5 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.
- Wednesday, March 19 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers and via Zoom. 800-422-0232.

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

TRIBAL OFFICE CLOSURES

Tribal offices will be closed on Monday, Feb. 17, in observance of Tribal Chiefs' Day.

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/CTGRFCFS

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:

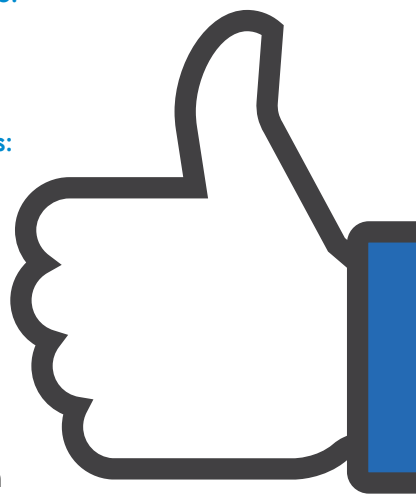
facebook.com/GrandRondeCommunityGarden

Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department:

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

Grand Ronde Employment Services

Facebook.com/EmploymentServices



ATNI in the house



Contributed photo

The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians held their 2025 Winter Convention at the Hilton Portland Downtown in Portland Sunday-Thursday, Jan. 26-30. Tribal Council member Denise Harvey, second from left, participated in the Gaming Committee report as committee co-chair, general assembly when the Indian Gaming Association presented leadership awards to ATNI executive board members (pictured) and assisted Tribal Housing Department Manager and ATNI Housing Committee Co-chair Shonn Leno on the committee's report. Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George, Tribal Council member Lisa Leno and other Tribal staff also attended the convention.

Spirit Mountain Casino Tribal Marketplace seeking vendors

Spirit Mountain Casino will host a Tribal Marketplace from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 21-22.

Vendor spots are open to Grand Ronde Tribal members, other Tribes and community members. The cost is \$30 per table with a \$10 fee for a second table.

Spots are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Payment and registration will secure a spot in the vendor table assignment lottery.

For more information or to register for the marketplace, contact SMC Purchasing Manager Shauna Skinner at Shauna.Skinner@SpiritMtn.com or 503-879-3916; or Purchasing Supervisor Tanya Lopez at Tanya.Lopez@SpiritMtn.com or 503-879-3746. ■

20th Annual Agency Creek Round Dance

Friday February 28

- 5pm Pipe Ceremony
- 6pm Traditional Meal
- 7pm Round Dance

HEAD STAFF

- Pipe Carrier: Bobby Mercier
- Emcee: Devon Bellerose
- Stickman: Rocky Morin
- Helpers: Derrick Keeswood, Marc Longjohn, Adrian Cross, Darrel Paskimin



02/28- 03/01 Grand Ronde Tribal Gym

Saturday March 1

- 6pm Meal
- 7pm Round Dance

INVITED SINGERS

- Lyle Tootoosis
- Algin Scabbyrobe
- Sidrick Baker
- Edmund Bull
- Troy Tootoosis
- GrayEagle Cardinal
- Arnold Alexis
- Alan Bonaise
- Kelsey Fox
- Irwin Waskawitch
- Chase Sayer
- Draper Musmum
- Damien Totus
- Tyron Tafoya

Thank you for respecting Grand Ronde community & culture by not displaying gang affiliation and by not bringing drugs, alcohol, or weapons to this event.

Attendees can reserve rooms at Spirit Mountain Lodge by calling 1-800-760-7977 and providing code:5571



Food Bank news

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

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

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

The Food Bank will hold February 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 in the Veteran's House, Acting Chair: Pamala Warren-Chase.
- **Editorial Board** meets monthly. The next meeting will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 21 via Zoom. Contact Chair Mia Prickett at Editorial.Board@grandronde.org for the meeting link.
- **Education Committee** meets at 5:30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of the month in the Adult Education building. Interim Chair: Valeria Atanacio.
- **Elders Committee** meetings have been paused. Meeting times will be updated when information is available.
- **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 Molalla Room of the Health & Wellness Center. Chair: Darlene Aaron.
- **Housing Grievance Board** meets at 3 p.m. the third Thursday of the month in the Housing Department conference room. Chair: Harris Reibach.
- **Powwow Special Event Board** meets as needed at the Community Center. Dates vary. Contact Dana Ainam at 503-879-2037. Chair: Dana Ainam.
- **TERO Commission** meets at 10 a.m. the second Tuesday of the month in the Employment Services building. Chair: Russell Wilkinson.
- **Timber Committee** meets at 5 p.m. the second Thursday of the month at the Natural Resources building off Hebo Road. Chair: Jon R. George.
- **Veterans Special Event Board** meets at 5:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month in the Quenelle House. Chair: Raymond Petite.

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



2020 – Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy testified before the Congressional Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples, seeking to correct a mistake written into the Grand Ronde Reservation Act in 1994. The error was intended to correct the exclusion of 84 acres of land that became known as the Thompson Strip, from the Tribe's reservation.



2020 File photo

However, the Department of the Interior “developed broad language that relinquished any future claims of this type within the state of Oregon” by the Grand Ronde Tribe, Kennedy told the committee.

2015 – The Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center launched its patient portal, an encrypted website giving patients 24-hour access to their medical records, as well as a way to correspond with their provider team. Tribal Clinical Applications Coordinator Darin Riggs said that in the future, patients would be able to request prescription refills and receive appointment reminders through the website.

2010 – Numerous Tribal members and Tribal Council members attended the second annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow in Salem. The powwow included cultural demonstrations and vendors, as well as dancing and drumming. Grand Ronde Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor said that part of the message of the powwow was that “Native people were here before Oregon, that they continue to be here as Tribal governments, and that they have a definite economic and political clout in their communities. Native power is a force to be reckoned with and it's a good thing for Oregon.”

2005 – The Tribal Council traveled to Portland for its February General Council meeting to meet with Tribal membership living in the area. Nearly 130 people attended and many expressed their appreciation to the council for making the trip. Others, however, expressed frustration over different issues.

2000 – Tribal leaders and employees of the Willamette National Forest signed a memorandum of understanding, agreeing that the state would seek the Tribe's input and consultation on forest management practices. It said that the Tribal Council, Cultural Resource Protection Staff and perhaps Elders might be asked to provide recommendations regarding culturally significant sites, public usage and the naming of certain areas.

1995 – No edition available

1990 – No edition available

1985 – No edition available

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

MARRIAGES IN TRIBAL COURT

Tribal Court is issuing marriage licenses and able to perform marriage ceremonies for a filing fee of \$40. Contact the Tribal Court at 503-879-2303. ■

ELECTION BOARD VACANCIES

One permanent full time board member position open.

Two alternate board member positions open.

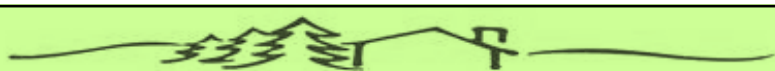
Qualifications:

Basic computer skills / file search / email / phone inquiries / flexible hours.

Election Board Chair:
Kalene Contreras

For information contact:

Shannon Ham-Texeira • 503-879-2301
shannon.ham-texeira@grandronde.org



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 pauses enrollment, approves emergency amendment

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved amending its enrollment ordinance on an emergency basis as well as putting a temporary enrollment pause in place at a special Thursday, Jan. 30, meeting.

The emergency ordinance will include updating the membership criteria, genetic testing section, application process and other changes to align with the recently passed lineal descent constitutional amendment, which was certified by the Bureau of Indian Affairs on Tuesday, Jan. 21.

The enrollment pause will affect non-infants over six months of age, as well as non-emergency enrollments. It will be in effect until Tuesday, June 3. Infants younger than six months or children subject to juvenile dependency proceedings may still apply for enrollment during the pause.

The pause was instituted in order to seek input from Tribal members regarding the enrollment process and also to give

Tribal staff time for implementation.

“I kind of wish it was a shorter timeframe but after we discussed everything with staff and the majority of council, the June 3 date is what has been approved,” Tribal Council member Denise Harvey said. “I was kind of hoping for a 90-day process and I know our members are waiting for this process to move forward. Be patient, we’re getting there and hopefully everything goes smooth.”

Tribal Council member Matthew Haller said council will need to work with staff and various programs that will be affected.

“(There will be) lots of different enrollment type of situations that we really have to work for so as per staff recommendations, this is how we came up with the six-month timeline,” he said.

The Tribe hosted a community input meeting about the constitutional amendment process following the Tribal Council meeting. It was held in executive session, which limits Smoke Signals reporting on the content. ■

Tribal Council approves several credit card authorizations

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved three credit card authorizations and two increases at its Wednesday, Feb. 5, meeting.

Council approved credit cards with a \$5,000 limit for Tribal Employment Rights Office Director Harris Reibach, \$35,000 for Procurement Manager Nathan Rolston and \$5,000 for the chinuk wawa skul (Tribal school).

Additionally, credit card limit increases were approved for Health & Wellness Department Operations Director Tresa Mercier from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and the Procurement Department from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

“We have 64 cards currently within the organization with more than 800 employees,” Finance Officer Chris Leno said at a Tuesday, Feb. 4, Legislative Action Committee meeting. “Tribal Council has cards, most at the manager level have cards and there’s several in education, health and procurement. We are monitoring that and I don’t want the widespread utilization of cards. It is not to be used in place of a purchase order. These are utilized only (in the case of) someone who will not take a purchase order or if there’s not enough time for one, such as for firefighters and things like that. We do monitor use and we are paying attention.”

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved a grant application for up to \$5 million to the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, for vocational rehabilitation services for Native Americans with disabilities;
- And approved a grant application for up to \$100,000 to the Climate Smart Communities Initiative organization to help advance community-based climate resiliency efforts.

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

City Council members said they took the Tribe’s objections seriously

MOU continued from front page

imply support or opposition to a possible casino located within the Salem area.”

However, the actual MOU did not spell out Atchison’s caveat. Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryl A. Kennedy submitted a letter of testimony to the council about the proposed MOU.

Tribal Council member Kathleen George testified in person.

They asked the city to, at the very least, include a provision in the memo that explains the city is not endorsing the casino.

Kennedy’s letter went further.

“The executive order President Buchanan signed creating the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation states explicitly that it is created for the benefit of the Willamette Valley Tribes, and specifically those Tribes signatory to the treaty of Jan. 22, 1855 (the Willamette Valley Treaty). Full consultation with Grand Ronde as the primary consulting Tribe of the Salem area has not yet happened,” Kennedy wrote. “Grand Ronde and the city of Salem have enjoyed a beneficial intergovernmental relationship that, until now, evidently respected and promoted Grand Ronde’s deep ancestral ties to the landscapes of its Salem homelands. For the city to approve the proposed Siletz casino (MOU) would be to destroy that relationship and to completely demean Grand Ronde’s millennia old cultural interests, damaging both beyond repair.”

Atchison told the City Council that “There is no intent to disrespect the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde. We have had a working relationship with the Grand Ronde over the years; they have helped us in a number of

ways regarding inadvertent discovery plans and a number of other issues throughout the community. I personally deeply appreciate the relationship we’ve had with the Grand Ronde and our work in this agreement was at the request of the Siletz; it really had nothing to do, from my perspective, with affecting our relationship with the Grand Ronde and I’m sorry to see the Grand Ronde’s letter, but I understand where they’re coming from.”

He explained at the meeting and in his council memo that, “The purpose and intent of the MOU is to ensure that the Tribe has the same rights and obligations as other residents and property owners within the city, with the understanding that the Tribe is a sovereign nation and exempt from many local, state and federal laws.”

The memo noted that, “The Tribe may obtain other city services on the same basis and cost as other residents or businesses.”

City Council members said they took the Tribe’s objections seriously.

Councilor Vanessa Nordyke moved to table the MOU until the council has had time to consult with both Tribes and the council’s attorney.

“We don’t want to rush things,” she said. “We don’t want to disturb long-existing relationships. I’m mindful of the fact that American governments do not have a great history of respecting the rights of sovereign nations, so this should be treated with respect, and I think it’s appropriate that we just take a pause and come back when we have a little more information.”

The motion passed unanimously. No date has been set yet for when the issue might go back before the council. ■

Tribal Library merges with Regional Library Service

The Tribal Library has merged with the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service, said Tribal Librarian Kathy Cole.

Tribal members can now get books from libraries in Polk, Yamhill and Marion counties, as well as access to many free programs.

Tribal Library patrons should visit the Tribal Library and update their information and obtain a new Regional Library Service card.

For more information, contact Cole at 503-879-1488. ■

See you at
Sweethearts Jam!
Please join us for a lush lamatsin event!

**Wednesday,
February 19th,
2025**

5:00- 7:00 PM

**Tribal
Gymnasium**

Dinner will be provided!

MMIP nonprofit Ampkwa Advocacy holds dinner

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

Images cycled on the large screens set around the room at the Spirit Mountain Casino Event Center: Women with red handprints across their faces interspersed with grim statistics. Globally, the screens noted, women and girls comprise 71% of enslaved peoples; men and boys 29%. An estimated 50,000 people are trafficked into the United States every year; most of them from Mexico and the Philippines.

Ampkwa Advocacy, a newly created nonprofit founded by Tribal member Amanda Freeman, held a dinner on Friday, Jan. 31, to introduce itself to the Tribe and help bring attention to the cause of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, an issue that has long been close to Freeman's heart.

The presentation noted that "approximately 96% of Indigenous women who experience violence are victimized by non-Native perpetrators, often due to jurisdictional loopholes on Tribal lands."

It continued, "Although 71% of Indigenous people live in urban areas, MMIP cases often go uninvestigated due to jurisdictional challenges and systemic neglect. ... More than four out of five Indigenous women have experienced violence in their lifetime."

But it was not just about the grim reality that too many Indigenous women and girls go missing, and a significant number of the vanished have been murdered. It was also about affirming identity and taking note of the wider global picture, in which abuse of women and girls worldwide sets the background for abuse within Indigenous communities. It was intended to help raise money for future awareness events, community programs and developing resource materials.

Tribal Council members Lisa Leno, Matthew Haller, Chris Mercier and Brenda Tuomi attended.

Freeman told the audience the new nonprofit is for the mothers, fathers, aunties, uncles, sisters and brothers that have been stolen.

"We are fighting against a system that refuses to care," she said.

Just getting law enforcement to take reports of missing Indigenous people seriously has often been a struggle.

"This was created out of necessity," Freeman said. "I was tired of seeing people pleading for resources ... and being dismissed before the search had even begun. I knew we needed to do more and fight for change, and not just awareness."

Yakama Nation member George Lee Jr., whose mother was murdered while he was serving in the military and unable to get home, told the audience that Indigenous people have been facing the mistreatment of women and girls since the 1800s, when gold was discovered in California.

"Miners would kidnap, rape and



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Marianne Blanchard attaches prayer ties to an art piece during the Ampkwa Advocacy Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Awareness Dinner at Spirit Mountain Casino's Event Center Friday, Jan. 31.



Tribal Council member Lisa Leno takes part in a candlelight vigil in remembrance of Indigenous homicide victim Priscilla Aldana during the Ampkwa Advocacy Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Awareness Dinner. Aldana was found dead on Jan. 3 in Salem.



murder Indigenous women and girls," he told the audience. "That is how long we have been fighting this fight."

Freeman told the audience that "I want us to promise we will not stop fighting ... Until we make it impossible for this crisis to be ignored, it will not stop happening."

Ampkwa Advocacy is intended to work for prevention as well as awareness, Freeman said. Toward that end, she wants to develop a "culture camp" with Native-taught skills for young people as a prevention program.

"When we are able to connect to our culture and to our ancestors, it brings a feeling of belonging," she said.

That connection can be a form of therapy, she said, providing people with an opportunity to think more deeply about how they want their lives to be and how they want to go about it.

Ampkwa "is the original spelling of 'Umpqua' in the Athapaskan language," according to Ampkwa Advocacy.

Freeman serves as board co-chair with Umatilla Tribal member Kola Shippentower. Grand Ronde Tribal member and Spirit Mountain Casino CEO Camille Mercier is board secretary, while former Tribal Council member and Tribal Elder Michael Cherry serves as treasurer.

Ampkwa Advocacy is a tax-exempt nonprofit. Freeman said that donations are critical in helping to grow and support the organization's initial efforts, including

represents North and Northeast Portland, is Shoshone-Bannock, Ute and Carrizo.

The amendment directs the Oregon Health Authority to dedicate staff to "lead the work of addressing the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous people" by providing victim services, outreach, education and prevention services. In addition, it states, they must work with Tribal governments and Native-led organizations, as well as law enforcement, to maintain data on MMIP, and to put community education and support programs in place.

"For far too long missing and murdered people have gone ignored," Leno told the committee. "While over the years we have made some strides in raising awareness and

bringing resources to the communities that have been impacted the most, there is still more work to be done. We believe that the Oregon Health Authority and their Tribal affairs team is the right team to lead this work. For decades, the Oregon Health Authority has worked closely with federally recognized Tribes and has provided valuable resources to the community it serves. They are leaders in education and prevention and have well-established relationships with some of the most vulnerable populations."

Freeman agreed.

"I stand before you today, not just as a representative of the Indigenous community, but as someone who understands the pain of families who have been left in the dark," she said. "The crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous people is not just a statistic. It's a reality lived by families every single day. Sadly, I have known many of these families personally and have asked to speak on their behalf."

Freeman reminded legislators that an Indigenous woman named Priscilla Aldana, a resident of Salem, went missing just before Christmas last year. Her body was found in early January on Lancaster Ave. Her domestic partner has been arrested and charged with murder.

"Her case is not just an isolated tragedy," Freeman said. "It reflects the violence that Indigenous women face every day and the justice they are often denied. Native women in Oregon face murder rates 10 to 12 times higher than the national average. And so many of us vanish without a trace. Our families are left to search for answers, often without the support that they need. I know that if I went missing, my family would fight for me, calling my name, searching tirelessly. But too often, our families are overwhelmed. They're dismissed and their pain is ignored as they struggle to get the help that they need." ■

awareness walks, safety workshops and advocacy programs tailored to Indigenous families and youth. Contributions will also fund the creation of educational campaigns, resource materials and other initiatives.

Freeman has been using her personal photography business as a way to raise awareness and funds for several years but is now moving into more formal advocacy and prevention work, although she is shy of having attention focused on her personally.

"I talked to her a couple years ago about creating a nonprofit and encouraging her to go down that road," Mercier said. "She's been spending a lot of her personal money – she goes on searches for people and gives help to people who need, and I know there are people out there who have said, 'Can we help?' ... I think she's sort of a trailblazer in our part of the state, that believes so passionately and so strongly in something that it's impossible to not want to be a part of that good energy."

Testimony given in Salem

On Monday, Feb. 3, Freeman and Tribal Council member Lisa Leno traveled to Salem to testify at a public hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee about House Bill 3198, which originally directed the Oregon Judicial Department to study the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous people and report back to the Legislature. An amendment introduced by Representative Tawna Sanchez replaced that text with a call to action. Sanchez, who

General Council briefed on Housing Department

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals editor

Housing Department Manager Shonn Leno briefed Tribal members on the department's various programs and accomplishments during a Sunday, Feb. 2, General Council meeting held at the Monarch Hotel & Convention Center in Clackamas and online via Zoom.

During the meeting, Leno discussed the department's different services and the addition of new housing units with more planned for 2025.

"Within our department, we provide not only housing but various programs, one of those being the down payment assistance grant," he said. "We updated it last year to \$20,000 with the caveat that if you used it previously, then you are eligible for the remainder of what you haven't utilized."

Approximately 50 of those grants are awarded per year and some are income based.

The home improvement matching grant program continues to be a popular program, Leno said. There is a lifetime cap of \$5,000 and funds can be used for virtually anything that improves a home's value. The applicant is required to contribute a dollar-for-dollar amount to receive money.

"We have everything from landscaping to fences to bathroom remodels," he said. "This one is pretty open because a lot of projects add value to your home."

Tenant-based rental assistance provides 20 vouchers for Tribal members to participate in a self-suf-

ficiency rental program in Yamhill County. The Housing Department also partners with Polk County for five vouchers.

"If you're willing to live in Polk or Yamhill counties, these programs are very beneficial and currently there's vouchers open in both programs," Leno said.

In Grand Ronde, housing waitlists remain long for certain units, with 49 applicants on the waitlist for one-bedroom units in low-income housing with 38 applicants waiting for market rate, two-bedroom units. In Elder housing, the two-bedroom waitlist is at 36 for low-income and 16 for market rate.

The student rental assistance program was recently increased from \$500 to \$1,000 per month for full-time Tribal students to account for rising rental costs. Part-time students receive \$500. Students are given checks for three months at a time. There are no income restrictions for the program.

Leno also discussed various housing services such as meeting with tenants who are experiencing financial or other issues, hosting an annual resource fair at Family Night Out with 35 local service providers, the annual Tribal Housing Easter Egg Hunt, booths at the Veterans Powwow and Contest Powwow and hosting ready-to-rent classes for



Shonn Leno

recent high school graduates. The classes are a new offering.

"When you get out of high school, you're usually 18 years old and you've never rented a house," Leno said. "You don't really know what the responsibilities of that would be. These classes walk you through what you're getting yourself into and I have three employees who are certified to teach those classes right here in Grand Ronde."

Leno also shared a chronology of all the Housing Department construction projects that have been built since 1996. These include 21 different projects ranging from Grand Meadows homeownership community and a family housing playground to Creekside Elder housing, the new Tipsu-ili'i Tribal homeownership development with 20 homes and two new apartment buildings in Tribal Housing.

"Within the last 10 years, we've built seven or eight different housing projects, so that's almost a project a year since I've been here," Leno said. "That's a lot of work, not just from my department but from the staff and of course nothing gets done without Tribal Council approval."

A tenant association was formed in 2024, which includes seven representatives who were elected by the tenants. The group will have quarterly meetings and assist with tenant communication and ideas for improvement.

Another method to improve communication with tenants will be the addition of new housing software that provides online access, e-forms, a rent payment portal and waitlist updates, Leno said.

"They can ask for a work order and actually fill out and request their own work orders," he said. "They can send us emails, look at their own accounts and hopefully we can get online payments for everyone that is in the housing community."

Leno shared information about a new apartment complex in McMinnville called Stratus Village. The Tribe partnered with the Yamhill County Housing Authority for 20, one- to three-bedroom units set aside for Tribal members. There is

also a community center with an office set aside for the Tribe.

"It's going to be a beautiful when it's done and it's going to be great for our current situation with housing," Leno said. "Hopefully it takes our list way down...The benefit of the McMinnville project is you'll be next to the hospital and a bus stop, and you can still access services out in Grand Ronde."

Lastly, Leno shared that the Tipsu-ili'i Tribal homeownership development has 19 of 20 homes occupied.

"The Tribal Council worked with our engineering department and myself and we sort of pulled off the impossible," Leno said. "This is one of my landmarks as a housing director, to get home ownership other than Grand Meadows in Grand Ronde and we actually did it...For the remainder of the property, there is actually room for another 32 homes that are going to be built there."

Leno anticipates that some of the 32 homes will be built next year.

New apartments will include phase three of the Wind River complex with 12 buildings. There will be 53 total low-income and market rate units. The Housing Department anticipates that groundbreaking will be done in late spring.

Afterward, Leno fielded 11 questions and comments from the audience. Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryl A. Kennedy thanked him for the presentation.

"I appreciate the good report," she said.

Door prize winners were Martha Jones, Amanda Freeman and Jade Unger, \$100; and Reyn Leno, Nina Portwood Shield, Robert Wiggs, Sedona Williams and Judy Ballini, \$50.

The next General Council meeting will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, March 2. The program report will be Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. in executive session.

After General Council concluded, a community input meeting followed.

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

Bill backers



Contributed photo

From left, Tribal Council member Lisa Leno, Oregon Health Authority Tribal Affairs Director Julie Johnson, Oregon Health Authority Tribal Behavioral Health Continuum of Care Advisor Angie Butler, Tribal member and Ampkwa Advocacy Founder/Chair Amanda Freeman and Tribal member Amber Eastman outside of the State Capitol building in Salem Monday, Feb. 3. Leno, Johnson and Freeman testified in favor of an amendment to House Bill 3198 that would require the Oregon Health Authority to provide preventive services and data about missing and murdered Indigenous people.

STORY IDEAS?

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

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



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Avender Stone, 10, laces his drum during the hayu-munk skukum hand drum making class for Portland Area Grand Ronde families at the Tribe's Portland Area Office Tuesday, Jan. 28. Next to him, from second from left, his siblings Sabel, Lirael and Liadan also lace their drums. hayu-munk skukum Enrichment Coordinator Jerald Harris taught the class.

Drum makers



Jeremiah Alexander, 12, laces his drum during the hayu-munk skukum hand drum making class for Portland Area Grand Ronde families at the Tribe's Portland Area Office Tuesday, Jan. 28.



Sabel Stone, 12, ties a knot as she laces her drum during the hayu-munk skukum hand drum making class for Portland Area Grand Ronde families at the Tribe's Portland Area Office Tuesday, Jan. 28. On the left, her mother Tabby helps her brother Avender. On the right is her sister Lirael.



Drum makers wrap rawhide around the drum frame during the hayu-munk skukum hand drum making class for Portland Area Grand Ronde families at the Tribe's Portland Area Office.

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Photos by Michelle Alaimo

No word yet on the cause of the blaze

FIRE continued from front page

The statement noted that the Department of Environmental Quality “is involved and has no concerns about the air quality at this time. Additionally, Clean Harbors, a contractor for air quality monitoring, has been brought in to place monitors in specific locations to ensure air quality remains safe throughout this process.”

All lanes of Highway 99E were reopened Friday morning.

Grand Ronde Tribal Communications Director Sara Thompson issued a statement saying, “We are disheartened by the fire at our property – tumwata village, the former Blue Heron Paper Mill, that began earlier this morning. While we are onsite and working with local authorities to assess the situation, our top priority is the safety and well-being of everyone involved. Our hearts are with Oregon City and local residents that have been impacted by this morning’s events and we ask that everyone give authorities the time and space to safely do their job. We will update you as we know more.”



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

A fire department drone monitors some flames during a blaze at the Tribe’s tumwata village property, the former Blue Heron Paper Mill on Thursday, Jan. 30.

Tribal Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb said he was notified almost immediately after the fire began.

“I received a call at 4 this morning from our security staff onsite, letting me know about the fire,” Webb said in an email. “When I arrived on site, Clackamas Fire District had already done a tremendous job setting up and trying to contain the fire. They are still actively working on suppressing



Gordon Bray of Oregon City takes photos of a blaze at the Tribe’s tumwata village property, the former Blue Heron Paper Mill, from the McLoughlin Promenade in Oregon City.

the fire and have told me they will likely be doing that for the remainder of the day, and maybe into the next few days. After that, the Tribe will help support the fire district in any way we can to complete their investigation into the fire and the causes.”

There is no word yet on the cause of the blaze.

“Until the fire is extinguished and the fire district investigation is complete, I am unsure of the impact this will have on demolition activities (at the tumwata site),” Webb said. “I do know the Tribe is committed to healing and restoring the land in the right way and will continue forward with our progress even with this challenge.” ■

UPDATE: Fire at tumwata village site continues to smolder

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

OREGON CITY — A fire at the former Blue Heron Paper Mill, the Tribe’s tumwata village property, continues to smolder because it is too dangerous to enter the building and the roof is blocking water from reaching it, Clackamas Fire District officials said in a meeting on Friday, Feb. 7.

The community meeting, which included public officials and Tribal Engineering & Community Development Department Manager Ryan Webb, was intended to update the public about the fire. No cause has been released yet, as the fire is still under investigation. It began in the early morning hours of Thursday, Jan. 30.

“The fire is completely contained,” Assistant Fire Chief Dan Mulick said. “There is still smoke and flames that continue to pop up but that, again, is happening because we are doing a constant risk assessment and we are not going to put our firefighters at risk for something of no value.”

Even without entering, he said, firefighters attacking the fire from the bluff above the plant suffered burns and equipment was damaged by the heat of the fire.

Webb said the Tribe is working to demolish the buildings as quickly as possible.

He was notified of the fire within 15 minutes of the call to the fire district and reported to the site immediately. Later in the morning, Mulick asked him to join the fire district’s incident command team to oversee firefighting efforts, coordinate with officials from across the state and help where possible. That included hiring a contractor to conduct air quality monitoring and bringing in heavy equipment.

“We got a contractor out there to continue to do monitoring on a daily basis,” he said. “Really, the focus is on asbestos fibers, but they also do air quality monitoring related to gases as well.”

So far, no dangers have been found.

The Tribe has been working to clean up the property since purchasing it in 2019.

“The Tribe is very well-versed in demolition activities on the site, as well as cleanup activities,” Webb said. “Demolition has a process to follow ... from permits to doing sampling of the materials, to putting a plan in place, to then mobilizing specialized equipment to do it. We are all moving forward, and I think there’s been a lot of great collaboration from all entities involved to make sure that this happens in a timely manner, but there still is a process too, that we have to follow to make that happen.”

Nonetheless, Webb said, “I can assure everybody that the Tribe is doing what we can in a very timely manner to get these structures down as quickly as possible.”

Before the fire, the Tribe had planned on conducting demolition this year but that the timetable has been moved up.

Both Clackamas fire officials and Webb noted that the site is hard to keep trespassers out of, even with 24-hour onsite security, because the buildings are enormous and interconnected.

“The site itself is just such a maze of buildings that it is very difficult to know if someone is even on the site. ... our best and quick way to secure it is probably really taking structures down,” he said.

The mill has long been a fire hazard.

“Clackamas Fire is very familiar

with the Blue Heron complex,” Mulick said. “We have had numerous fires while the mill was operating that were smaller in nature, but it brought us in there quite often to get an understanding of that campus. Once the mill was shut down, we were very fortunate to have access to that property for training and it really has brought a greater awareness of the complexity, once we began actually hosting drills. ... Under any static situation that is a dangerous building, a dangerous complex, with pitfalls and falling debris and sharp objects.”

The dangers were forcibly brought home to the district, Mulick said, during a fire in 2020.

“We made tactical, strategic decisions to put our firefighters at risk, to mitigate the life threat that was brought forward to us,” he said.

However, the roof collapsed while firefighters were inside the building, with another crew on the roof.

Both groups barely escaped.

“That was a significant near miss with our agency and it drastically changed the way we handled this incident on January 30,” Mulick said. “There is no imminent risk to lives or properties or structures surrounding the Blue Heron incident and we will take no risk on a structure that has no value. We will continue to monitor it. We have crews that are passing by constantly and looking at the view from above, on the promenade, and we are going to manage anything that comes up, with reasonable expectations focused around firefighter safety.”

Webb said he is grateful to the district.

“(Firefighters) did an incredible job working to get that fire out and make sure it was safe for the public, and we at the Tribe are deeply grateful,” he said. “You truly are some amazing people doing some amazing work.” ■

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The book began with a poem

BOOK continued from front page

same way they did.

A few years ago, their longtime friend and colleague in early childhood education, Katie Kissinger, decided that Peco's stories about the way binary gender roles have affected them should be more widely shared, for the sake of both children and the adults in their lives.

That was the beginning of a children's book they wrote together; "Beat the Drum," which tells the story of a girl who isn't Peco, exactly, but is perhaps who they could have been. Like Peco, the girl in the book wants to pursue her own interests — things like drumming and carving — that are largely reserved for boys and men. And, like Peco, she knows that while she is a girl, she is also more than that: She is Two-Spirited.

"The story is created based on the child she would have been, if she had had the support to be herself," Kissinger said. "And I think it's something as people who are working for justice and inclusion for all children, we want all children to be able to speak up for themselves, and feel the power, like the Overcomer does in the book."

Both Peco and Kissinger remain passionate about advocacy and early childhood education. Both serve on the board of the Threads of Justice Collective, which is dedicated to supporting young children in anti-bias education. The book continues that work.

"Oppression represents trauma in the lives of young children and it's our job to teach children to resist the messages of society and to be allies to one another in that effort," Kissinger said.

In addition, Peco said, "We teach adults how to intervene on behalf of children," so that they are not left feeling unsupported.

The book began with a poem, Kissinger said.

"I wrote a poem for an early childhood conference we were having. ... It was a call to action for teachers and at the end I said, 'If this child were in your classroom, how would you support them? How would you make sure they didn't have to work this hard?'"

Later, she decided to turn her poem into a children's book.

Initially, she intended it to be a surprise and reached out to Peco's granddaughter, Tribal descendent Chenoa Barton, to provide the illustrations.

"We got partway in and I remembered that my friend Qahir does not like surprises," Kissinger said.

When Kissinger and Barton sought their approval, Peco said, "Once I got past the shock," the idea was appealing.

"I like the message and I like the way it's given, not in the dominant culture way but in a Native way," they said.

They also found that they had something to add to the story. "Since it was a Native story and based on Native things that had

happened, I wanted to add the chinuk piece, and I was in a chinuk class at the time," Peco said.

Friend and fellow artist, Tribal descendant Felix Furby, helped with the translations and often reads the chinuk wawa translations during story readings.

Both Peco and Kissinger said they grew up hearing that they ought to be "ladylike," something that didn't interest Peco in the least.

"I was really good at sports, which was supposedly atypical for a girl," they said. "I was also really good in math, which was considered atypical for girls."

Softball and tennis were among their favorite sports. Peco lettered on the high school tennis team.

"Oftentimes I was the most valuable player in tournaments in softball," they said. "I was fourth batter. So, it wasn't just that I liked (sports); I was fairly good at them. But the message was always that it wasn't ladylike, and oftentimes too, when I was going to school, you had to wear a dress or skirts. You weren't supposed to wear pants. Often I had shorts underneath, so when I got home I would just pull my clothes off, and I had shorts underneath, and my dad was appalled because it wasn't ladylike."

And yet, they believed the adults around them, who said they would grow out of their interests.

"So, I waited and it never happened," Peco said.

Instead, they went right on playing on sports teams, joining city leagues as an adult, teaching themselves to drum and learning to carve.

The illustrations in the book reflect some of those realities, Kissinger noted, as these are informed by Peco and Barton's relationship.

"You can tell she knows and loves her grandma," Kissinger said. "A lot are actual reflections of Qahir's artwork — you see the actual drum (they) made, and the carving (they) did."

But for all their determination to

be wholly themselves, there have been painful realities.

"I have drummed for the Tribe at other events but never at the plankhouse," they said. "My grandson, when he was 5, I made him a drum and he could use that drum and drum in the plankhouse, and in fact, he drummed at his kindergarten graduation. But I would not be allowed to."

Even today, they noted, "They teach the girls to dance and they teach the boys to drum; they teach the girls to rattle and they teach the boys to be drum singers."

Peco remembers when the Tribe temporarily stopped performing marriages in the early 2000s, in order, they said, to avoid making a decision on whether to perform same-sex marriages.

Watching the country increase in tolerance over several decades only to see today's harsh backlash with the election of the new president has been painful, they said.

"Now it's sanctioned, so anybody can feel encouraged and righteous about discriminating against people — it can lead from name calling and humiliation all the way up to physical violence," they said. "It's more painful and it's more scary."

But neither Peco nor Kissinger have given up.

"I never would have guessed that we would be regressing in this way," Kissinger said. "The book is way more controversial than it was when it was published, and so we're talking about trying to get the book into more places where there are kids who might be being targeted."

Lessons like those in the book, Peco said, provide "a way to build resiliency for people who are going to be targets when you are affirming that what they are doing is right, but that some people might not like it."

Tribal Librarian Kathy Cole said she has ordered a copy of the book for the library. It is also available for purchase online at Lulu.com. ■



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Tribal members speak at ICE

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

Two Tribal member were invited by the Indian Gaming Association to speak at the ICE World Gaming Forum in Barcelona, Spain, in January. The conference attracted some 55,000 attendees.

Tribal Council member Denise Harvey, who is a Pacific Northwest delegate on the IGA board of directors, and Spirit Mountain Casino CEO Camille Mercier spoke on different panels.

They addressed Indian gaming in the United States, and the importance of Tribal sovereignty in enabling Tribes to create a much-improved economic standing for their members, as well as how Tribes have used that standing to improve their surrounding communities.

“I spoke on two panels; one was on gaming in general and our operations,” Harvey said. “The other panel was on the philanthropic and foundation process. There’s no tracking of how these companies or these casinos and folks are doing charitable donations, but it’s in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Nobody ever talks about that, about the positive side of gaming. Everybody likes to point out gambling addiction and those things. But there’s a whole side that nobody ever talks about and charitable giving is pretty big across the world.”

Gaming is a huge business worldwide, she noted.

“I know it came up in the panel that gaming worldwide is a \$500 billion industry,” Harvey said. “Indian gaming in the U.S. is \$41.9 billion industry and those were numbers prior to COVID-19, and we’ve still been able to continue and thrive and come back to those pre-COVID numbers.”

The audience, Harvey said, was “really interested in how we were doing things and how we show to the public how much we give.”

She noted that the casino maintains a bulletin board listing its most recent quarterly donations for guests.

Spirit Mountain Community



Contributed photos

Tribal Council member Denise Harvey, middle, participates in the Indian Gaming Association’s “Tribal Partnerships in U.S. Interactive Wagering: Unlocking New Potential” panel during the International Casino Exhibition World Gaming Forum in Barcelona, Spain Tuesday, Jan. 21.



Spirit Mountain Casino CEO Camille Mercier, right, participates in the “How AI Technology and Real-World Casinos are Shaping the Future Together” panel during the International Casino Exhibition World Gaming Forum.

Fund, the Tribe’s charitable arm, was founded in 1997, two years after the casino opened. In the nearly three decades since, it has become a powerhouse, funding not only Tribal programs and members, but also programs throughout the region. The Tribe donates 6% of casino revenue to registered nonprofit organizations in northwest Oregon, as well as government agencies in Lane, Polk, Tillamook and Yamhill counties, and to the nine federally recognized Tribes of Oregon, the fund notes on its website. In 28 years, it has provided 3,394 grants totaling \$100,177,653.

Its program of giving “continues

but also you know, all Native American Tribes at such an international stage,” Mercier said.

The panel she spoke on “went so long that we didn’t have time for questions,” she said, but she’s collected a number of people’s contact information for later follow-up, including a man from Brazil. “They’re just really on the precipice of learning all they can about gaming and how to bring it forward in Brazil,” Mercier said. “So I look forward to learning more from him.”

Mercier and Harvey said it was especially interesting to talk about the differences between casinos in different parts of the world, which can look very different. For example, they said, in European countries, casinos tend to be much smaller and lack associated amenities such as restaurants and hotels.

In addition, Mercier said, “their business models and strategies are different,” along with the types of games they focus on. Slots are emphasized in the United States, while table games receive far more focus in European countries.

The use of artificial intelligence was also discussed extensively, both Harvey and Mercier said. Mercier spoke on a panel about how AI is helping to shape the future of casinos.

“The technology piece was fascinating,” Mercier said.

It included both artificial intelligence and use of robots, both of which are likely to reach Oregon sooner or later, she said.

“I think it will be coming everywhere at some point,” Mercier said. “A lot of regulations are being looked at right now, for safety, but I think there will be things coming that we just can’t avoid. AI, the computer learning is amazing, but what I think it will help us do is improve customer transactions and experiences and I think that’s the exciting part for us. I believe there are casinos in the U.S. that have a robot dog that greets guests, does dog tricks but also are looking for weapons and doing facial recognition. There are some interesting things happening in the business.” ■

the Native tradition of potlatch, a ceremony at which good fortune is distributed,” the website states. “Through our grant programs, we promote the sustainability, inclusion and advancement of underserved communities in Oregon, while being reflective of the Tribe’s history, culture and values.”

It was Harvey’s second time speaking at the conference and Mercier’s first. Both said they would be interested in returning if the gaming association were to again pay for most of the cost.

Mercier said she found the experience valuable and was taken aback by how immense the conference was.

“I was honored to be there ... it was exciting to represent the Tribe,

Cultural Resources hosting zine making workshops

The Cultural Resources Department’s art program is hosting a series of small self-publishing/zine making workshops given by Grand Ronde Tribal member and artist Steph Littlebird.

Classes will be held from 3-6 p.m. on the third Thursday of February, March and April at the Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center. Class dates are Feb. 20, March 20 and April 17.

The classes are for all ages and will focus on making a self-published booklet that can be made from one or multiple pieces of paper, including all poetry, comics, short stories, art or any kind of creative project for the page.

The first two classes will introduce participants to different types of zines, while also creating a unique booklet to take home. During the third and final class, zines will be created to give as gifts to the United States Poet Laureate Ada Limón when she visits Grand Ronde later in May 2025, a collaborative event with Sitka Center For Art & Ecology and the Nestucca Valley School District. Some art supplies will be on hand and participants may also bring their own supplies.

This is a drop-in style workshop and participants are not required to attend all three classes.

Contact Mack McFarland at mack.mcfarland@grandronde.org for more information. ■

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & PREVENTION

JANUARY – MARCH 2025 EVENTS

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
<p>Chinuk Winter Gathering Dates: TBD</p> <p>Round Dance Gift Making Dates: 1/8 - 3:30-6:30 1/15 - 11:30-1:30 1/22 - 3:30-6:30 1/29 - 11:30-1:30 Location: Community Center</p> <p>Stick Game Dates: 1/16 - 3:30-5:15 1/30 - 3:30-5:15 Location: Youth Ed. Building J</p>	<p>Love Rocks Date: 2/14 - 11am-2pm Location: Community Center</p> <p>Unity Conference Date: 2/6-2/9 Location: Arizona</p> <p>Youth Native Wellness Day Date: 2/28 9am - 4pm Location: Tribal Gym</p> <p>Agency Creek Round Dance Date: 2/28 starting at 5pm Location: Tribal Gym</p> <p>Stick Game Dates: 2/11 - 3:30-5:15 2/27 - 3:30-5:15 Location: Youth Ed. Building J</p>	<p>Agency Creek Round Dance Date: 3/1 starting at 6pm Location: Tribal Gym</p> <p>9 Tribes Youth Prevention Camp Date: 3/24-3/28 Location: TBD</p> <p>Canoe Journey Prep Dates: TBD</p> <p>Stick Game Dates: 3/13 - 3:30-5:15 Location: Youth Ed. Building J</p>

*All events are subject to change, please look out for our official fliers on the Youth Empowerment & Prevention Facebook page.



Hall of Legends at Spirit Mountain Casino

Call for Tribal family photos for the Hall of Legends at Spirit Mountain Casino electronic display

We are excited to invite all Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde members and their families to submit your family photos for inclusion in a special electronic display in the Hall of Legends at Spirit Mountain Casino. This project is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and preserve the legacy, history and culture of our community through shared moments captured in pictures.

Photos submitted should have a connection to CTGR and can showcase any aspect of tribal life, including familial gatherings, school events, sports teams, cultural ceremonies or other significant occasions. We encourage you to label your submissions with as much information as possible, such as names, dates, locations and the story behind the moment.

Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- **Submission details:** Ensure photos are clearly labeled with information about the event or gathering, the individuals featured and any other relevant context.
- **Photo considerations:** While we will make every effort to include all submitted photos, inclusion is not guaranteed. Photos will be reviewed for quality, content and appropriateness. Please refrain from sending original photos, as they will not be returned.
- **Photo adjustments:** To ensure a high-quality display, our team reserves the right to make general improvements to photos, such as cropping, sharpening and adjusting focus or clarity.

This is a unique opportunity to celebrate our shared heritage and strengthen the bonds of our Tribal community. Submit your photos and the photo submission form below, no later than **Wednesday, April 30**, by mailing to: Hall of Legends Submissions, Spirit Mountain Casino, ATTN: Carter Tollas, 27100 SW Salmon River Hwy., Grand Ronde, OR 97347. Help us honor the past, present and future of the Grand Ronde people.

You can also visit the Spirit Mountain website at www.SpiritMountain.com, then scroll to the bottom of the page to the GET IN TOUCH header, and click the “Hall of Legends” link to submit online.

We look forward to seeing the stories your photos tell! ■

ZINE WORKSHOP

WITH *Steph Littlebird*

LEARN TO MAKE BOOKS + PAMPHLETS

→ DISCOVER THE ART OF SELF-PUBLISHING

- 2/20/25
- @ CHACHALU MUSEUM
- 3/20/25
- 4/17/25

3-6PM

ALL AGES WELCOME

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. ■

ATTENTION GRANDE RONDE HOUSING APPLICANTS

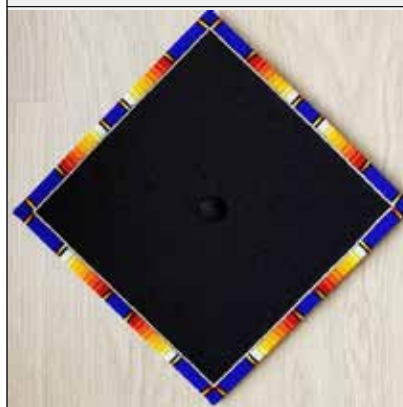
If you were accepted to be on our waitlist before 2024 and have not turned in your waitlist update letter please contact the housing department immediately. We must update this information every year in order to keep our list up to date and have accurate contact information for when your name comes to the top of the waitlist. This is our last effort to reach the few that have not responded to mail, phone or email. If you have not turned in the form and do not contact the housing department by **Saturday, March 1**, your name will be removed from the waitlist.



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

GRADUATION CAP BEADING

With Marcel



February
27th, 2025
2:00pm - 6:00pm
@Public Health
Building

A basic black cap will be provided for the first 20 people to arrive



Beads will be provided and available, but you may bring your own as well.



hush lamatsin

Gas discount

Grand Ronde Tribal members, as well as Tribal and Spirit Mountain Casino employees, can receive a 30-cent per gallon discount on gasoline at the Tribally owned Grand Ronde Station convenience store.

Tribal members and employees must go inside and show either their enrollment card or employee identification card to receive the discount. ■

Market time



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Margie Fechtner looks at a pair of earrings while shopping at the February Market in the Tribal gym Friday, Feb. 7. The market featured handmade items by local artists. It was organized by Tribal members Bee Foster and Kaylene Barry.



Tribal Elder Julie Duncan looks at a belt that is for sale at the February Market in the Tribal gym Friday, Feb. 7.

Community Fund seeking Hatfield Fellow applicants

Applications for the 2025-26 Hatfield Fellowship program funded by Spirit Mountain Community Fund are being accepted from Monday, March 3 through Friday, May 2.

Spirit Mountain Community Fund annually sponsors a Native American to serve as the Hatfield Fellow and intern in an Oregon congressional office. Placement of the fellow rotates through the Oregon delegation to enhance mutual understanding between leadership in Washington, D.C., and Indian Country.

Fellows are provided an opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of how to navigate the political process in Washington, D.C., while working on issues that affect Native Americans.

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

The fellowship is for Tribal members from the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon, as well as members of Pacific Northwest Tribes. Preference will be given to members of Oregon Tribes. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree or be graduating in June 2025, and be 21 or older.

For more information, visit thecommunityfund.com/grants-programs/hatfield-fellowship or go to youtu.be/7TOnNoFgUYs to watch an informational video about the Hatfield Fellowship.

The fellowship was created in 1998 to honor the late Sen. Mark Hatfield's public service to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. ■

February is National Heart Month



Heart disease is the leading cause of death among people in the United States.

Join us for a heart healthy event!

When: Wednesday, February 19th, 2025, from 12-1 pm

Where: The Cheryle Kennedy Public Health Building

What: An event to raise awareness of heart health in our community. We will offer a short education session on heart healthy habits, plus a gentle yoga session taught by CTGR Tribal Member Diana Robertson. Snacks provided! Yoga mats will be available--feel free to bring your own if you would prefer to. You can also participate in your work attire!




**Baker Technical Institute
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Concrete Basics Training**






This training is a hands-on, beginner-friendly training where you will acquire the skills to prepare the work area, build and set up forms, calculate the amount of concrete needed for your project, leveling and finishing techniques, and ensuring proper curing of the concrete, all while adhering to safety protocols and gaining an understanding of basic concrete principles.

Date: February 24-28, 2025 **Time:** TBD
Location: GTGR Employment Service
 9615 Grand Ronde Rd
 Grand Ronde, OR 97347

Register for training by calling 503-879-2146 or email tero@grandronde.org



◆ A Different Kind of Education ◆

Drop box installed

The Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department, 9655 Grand Ronde Road, has a medication drop box located in the front lobby.

Lobby hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The drop box is for any prescribed or over-the-counter medication. If the containers are too large to fit in the drop box, please repackage them in a zip-lock plastic bag.

Needles and liquids are not allowed in the drop box.


Tribal Police suggest mixing liquid medications with cat litter or coffee grounds and then throwing them away with the household trash.

For more information, call 503-879-1821. ■

Health & Wellness Center entrance

Reminder: The drive-through entrance at the Health & Wellness Center is for loading and unloading only. The entrance was built with our Elders and those with mobility issues and their ease of access in mind. If you are coming to the center to pick up prescriptions, please park in one of our regular parking spaces. ■

the MU Concourse Gallery presents
the collective works of



Frank Eugene Kowing
Apr. 1, 1944 - Sept. 24, 2016

Previously shown @ Linfield University,
Salem, OR; The Dalles Museum,
and Clatsop Community College

Come to the Reception:
Thursday 2/20/25
-5pm til -7pm

RSVP to Terry @
tkowing@yahoo.com for the live buffet
January 15th through March 21st

MU Art Collection
Gallery & Restoration

For accommodations relating to disability,
please contact reservations@oregonstate.edu
or call 541.737.2416

Oregon State University



BTI
BAKER TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

TRIBAL EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OFFICE
THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES
OF GRAND RONDE

**Baker Technical Institute
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Heavy Equipment Operator Training**

This course is for participants who want to train on Dozers, Wheel Loaders, Excavators, and more. Students will learn both in our high-tech CAT Simulator mobile classroom and in the field, running equipment side by side with our experienced instructors. This training will prepare you for a great career!

- 3-week course - some type of construction experience is preferred
- Must be 18 years of age and enrolled in the TERO skills pool
- Must sign a contractual agreement that you will complete the course
- A valid driver's license is required

Simulated Training - Tribal Campus: February 24 - March 7, 2025

Land Lab Training - Albany: March 10-14, 2025

Register for training by calling 503-879-2146 or email tero@grandronde.org

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE

NATIVE YOUTH WELLNESS DAY

Hosted by Youth Empowerment & Prevention Program

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2025
8:30AM REGISTRATION
9AM-4PM

BREAKFAST, LUNCH & SNACKS PROVIDED
TRIBAL GYM

OPEN TO ALL NATIVE/DESCENDANT YOUTH IN MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL.


20TH ANNUAL AGENCY CREEK ROUND DANCE TO FOLLOW: STARTING AT 5PM

BIG DOOR PRIZES

RSVP AND FOR ANY QUESTIONS, EMAIL YEP@GRANDRONDE.ORG

FACILITATED BY NATIVE WELLNESS INSTITUTE

THANK YOU FOR RESPECTING GRAND RONDE COMMUNITY & CULTURE BY NOT DISPLAYING GANG AFFILIATION & BY NOT BRINGING DRUGS, ALCOHOL OR WEAPONS TO THIS EVENT.





Food drive for Easter boxes

Accepting donations until 4/11 at
the EAC.

One raffle ticket per item donated.

Easter boxes will be handed out by
the Food Pantry. Date TBD.



Reading volunteers needed

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

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

The time commitment is one hour per week. To learn more, contact 971-634-1628 or visit www.SMARTReading.org. ■



JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 7, 2025

CTGR EMPLOYMENT

Position Title	Grade	Min. Start Wage	Max Start Wage	Closing Date
Academic Coach 6-12	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Barista Trainee – Limited Duration - TERO	1	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	Until Filled
Cashier-Fueler - Part Time (Variable Shift)	3	\$15.59/hr.	\$15.59/hr.	Until Filled
CFS Supervisor	13	\$82,391.14/yr.	\$105,817.37/yr.	02/17/2025
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Therapist	12	\$74,901.04/yr.	\$96,316.53/yr.	Until Filled
Community Transition Case Manager	13	\$39.61/hr.	\$50.87/hr.	Until Filled
Compliance Manager – Gaming Commission	15	\$97,858.44/yr.	\$127,796.59/yr.	02/17/2025
Compliance Officer - TERO	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Cook – Sheridan – Great Circle Recovery	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	02/10/2025
Employment Caseworker	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Enrichment Coordinator-Supervisor K-5	9	\$27.05/hr.	\$34.96/hr.	02/10/2025
Grant Writer	12	\$74,901.04/yr.	\$96,316.53/yr.	Until Filled
Health Promotion Specialist – Community Health	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	Until Filled
Housekeeper – Sheridan – Great Circle Recovery	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	02/10/2025
Lodge Caregiver – Part-Time & On-Call * \$500 Hire-On Bonus after 120-days	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	Until Filled
Lodge Caregiver – Full Time * \$500 Hire-On Bonus after 120-days	7	\$22.36/hr.	\$29.00/hr.	02/17/2025
Mental Health Therapist – Behavioral Health	12	\$74,901.04/yr.	\$96,316.53/yr.	Until Filled
Mental Health Counselor – Sheridan – Great Circle Recovery	12	\$74,901.04/yr.	\$96,316.53/yr.	Until Filled
Milieu Safety Technician – Salem - Great Circle Recovery	6	\$20.75/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	Until Filled
Milieu Safety Technician – Sheridan – Great Circle Recovery	6	\$20.75/hr.	\$26.42/hr.	02/17/2025
Pharmacy Technician	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	Until Filled
Phlebotomist/Lab Assistant – Health & Wellness	8	\$24.60/hr.	\$31.84/hr.	02/17/2025
Physician – Health & Wellness	25	\$226,851.26/yr.	\$330,026.39/yr.	02/17/2025
Preschool Teacher	10	\$29.76/hr.	\$38.39/hr.	Until Filled
Staff Pharmacist	19	\$137,901.74/yr.	\$186,617.49/yr.	Until Filled
Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor – Part-Time	5	\$18.86/hr.	\$24.07/hr.	Until Filled
Temporary Pool	2	\$16.00/hr.	\$16.00/hr.	

We have transitioned to a new applicant portal system. Returning applicants will need to create a new profile in UKG. Previous log-in credentials with Acquire are no longer valid.

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

- INTERVIEWS WILL BE GIVEN IN THE FOLLOWING RANKING ORDER:
- Grand Ronde Tribal members.
 - (Qualified Grand Ronde Tribal members who show they meet the minimum qualifications of the position during the course of the screening and interview process will be given first consideration for hire and the recruitment process will end)
 - Tribal member spouses, parents and/or legal guardians of Grand Ronde Tribal member children and current regular employees.
 - External candidates.
- [Apply online at: www.grandronde.org](http://www.grandronde.org)

**February is
Teen Dating Violence
Awareness Month**



INSPIRE LOVE

RESPECT your partner and uplift EQUALITY in the relationship. Set HEALTHY BOUNDARIES and maintain SAFETY and SOVEREIGNTY. Honor CULTURE and spiritual practices. Choose LOVE and live FREE FROM VIOLENCE and abuse.



STRONGHEARTS
Native Helpline
844-7NATIVE (762-8483)
www.strongheartshelpline.org

Safe | Confidential | Anonymous | 24/7

This advertisement was produced by StrongHearts Native Helpline with Grant No 15POVC-23-GK-01582-TVAG, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this ad are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.



POSTING TITLE	CLOSE DATE	WAGE/SALARY
Cook	2/13/2025	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Kitchen Steward (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	2/13/2025	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Pre-Shop Host	2/13/2025	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Assistant Banquet Manager	Until Filled	\$48,329.22/yr. DOE
Bar Porter (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.29/hr. DOE
Casino Beverage Waitstaff (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$14.70/hr. DOE + Tips
Host/Hostess Cashier (*Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$18.02/hr. DOE
Slot Floor Supervisor	Until Filled	\$23.24/hr. DOE
Surveillance Agent I	Until Filled	\$18.55/hr. DOE
Surveillance Agent II	Until Filled	\$18.82/hr. DOE
Surveillance Agent III	Until Filled	\$21.22/hr. DOE
Table Games Dealer (Full-Time & *Part-Time)	Until Filled	\$14.70/hr. DOE + Tips

\$1,000 Hire-On Bonus All Positions
\$500 Referral Bonus SMC & CTGR Employees

NOTICE

We have transitioned to a new applicant portal system. Returning applicants will need to create a new account on UKG. Previous log-in credentials will not be valid.

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

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

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

✉ employmentteam@spiritmtn.com <https://www.spiritmountain.com/careers>
Call (503) 879-3737 for application assistance.

Kowing exhibit open now

An exhibit of paintings, sculptures and sketchbooks of Grand Ronde Tribal Elder Frank Kowing Jr., who walked on in 2016, will be at Oregon State University's Memorial Union building through Friday, March 21.

Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center Exhibit Coordinator Lyle Cairdeas helped bring Kowing's artwork that was currently stored at the museum to OSU for the exhibit.

A reception will be held from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 20. It is open to the public.

"We invite and encourage all that would like to come join us in celebrating not only Frank's art and ideas, but also a gathering of those whose lives he touched and inspired in so many ways," Cairdeas said.

For more information, contact angela.purviance@oregonstate.edu or lyle.cairdeas@grandronde.org. ■

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

CTGR FACILITIES DEPARTMENT

RECYCLE whatbin.com

Bottles and Tubs 4oz or Larger **Metals** **Mixed Paper and Cardboard**

Items Not Allowed

RECOLOGY.COM/RECOLOGY-WESTERN-OREGON RWDINFO@RECOLOGY.COM **R** *ITEMS MUST BE EMPTY, CLEAN & DRY *PLACE ITEMS LOOSE IN THE CONTAINER.

Now accepting applications!

Native American Habitat Restoration Internships at Elderberry Wisdom Farm - Spring and Summer 2025



The Native American nonprofit, Elderberry Wisdom Farm is recruiting interns pursuing conservation career pathways for its 2025 Habitat Restoration Internships. This paid opportunity provides Native Americans and other people of color an opportunity to receive culturally tailored training, experiential service learning, and mentoring. Traditional Ecological Knowledge is integrated with local restoration practices and native plant nursery development in collaboration with mid-Willamette Valley partners.

A \$3,000 stipend will be provided for those completing the nine-week internship. Spring trainings are held three days a week from March 31 to May 30, 2025 and in Summer from June 23 to August 22 for a total of 190 hours of indoor classroom education and experiential service-learning activities.

A highlight of the internship is the emphasis upon Native American habitat restoration practices that integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge principles, climate adaptation practices, and mentoring. The service learning will help you learn to strengthen the biodiversity and sustainability of mid-Willamette Valley ecosystems at our work sites, including wetlands, oak prairie, and organic farmland, plus Elderberry Wisdom Farm's four-acre native plant nursery and greenhouse south of Salem, OR.

There are opportunities for interns who are motivated to continue their training to become part-time employees or become emerging owners and operators of the habitat restoration or native plant nursery businesses EWF formed. Promising urban forestry and agroforestry opportunities even includes transitioning to organic farming, dry farming, and other practices that help to strengthen Native American food sovereignty as well as social and economic resilience of Native families.

To apply: Please complete the [application form](#). Visit our website at www.elderberrywisdom.org or if you have questions, feel free to leave a message at [contact us](#).



Paid ad

COOKING CLASSES FOR VETERANS

AT THE CHERYLE KENNEDY PUBLIC HEALTH BUILDING ~ GRAND RONDE, OR
FROM 11 AM TO 12 PM

Join us for a delicious meal and learn how to make it at home.

Win prizes and take home a gift card!

FEBRUARY 6, 2025,

SALMON & POTATOES (WITH A CHICKEN SWAP)

FEBRUARY 20, 2025,

STEW & SOUPS ~ ELK STEW & VENISON

MARCH 6, 2025,

DESSERTS ~ ICE CREAM, TARTS, & COBBLER

MARCH 20, 2025,

HOW TO USE LEFTOVERS



West Valley Veterans Memorial Application

Deadline is January 15, 2026

Name (as desired on memorial): _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Gender: Male/Female (Circle) _____

Rank: _____ Branch: _____ Honorable: Yes/No (Circle) _____

DOE: _____ Place of entry: _____

DOS: _____ Place of separation: _____

Deceased: Yes/No (Circle) _____ Place of burial: _____

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

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

Any applications received after January 15, 2026, will be kept on file for inclusion to the Memorial in 2027.



Watchlist: ‘Why Leonard Peltier’s clemency matters’

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

By Kamiah Koch

Social media/digital journalist

Considered the country’s longest serving political prisoner, Native American activist Leonard Peltier, now 80 years old, saw his sentence commuted on Monday, Jan. 20, 2025.

After being convicted of murdering two FBI agents in 1975 on the Pine Ridge Reservation and imprisoned for five decades, former President Biden commuted his sentence in the final minutes of his presidency.

“Leonard Peltier, over the years, has become this kind of symbol of Native Americans in general, of all the injustices that have faced Native American and Tribes in this country,” Senior Political Reporter Jennifer Bendery said in a HuffPost video. “He has come to embody something so much bigger than himself.”

According to Bendery, the crime that landed Peltier in prison was during a time of intense conflict between Tribes and the federal government agencies. The HuffPost video shows black-and-white photos of Native people protesting – peacefully and combatively – during that time.

“This reservation happened to be a site where the FBI was intentionally fueling tensions between different Tribes there because it was part of a grander secret plan by the FBI to infiltrate and destroy a group called AIM, which stands for American Indian Movement,” Bendery said.

AIM advocated for the rights of Native Americans and fought back against the government’s injustices towards Indigenous people.

Peltier was arrested for the murders but according to Bendery, the FBI did a shady investigation with no real evidence he committed the crime and used witnesses who were coerced to lie.

Throughout the years of his sentence, many groups advocated for his release, and many former presidents considered it. Former President Biden spent a lot of his presidency “righting the wrongs” of America’s relations with Tribes, according to the HuffPost video. One of those rights included releasing Peltier from prison and into home confinement where he could spend the rest of his days with family. Peltier has several health issues now including an aortic aneurism.

Bendery attributes his release to the thousands of voices who continued to fight for Peltier’s release. On Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2025, he will be welcomed home by a community who never gave up on him.

You can watch the entire video for yourself at www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEYEQZKUvAg. ■

TERO Worker of the Month January 2025

Name: Tony Gonzalez
Employer: K&E Excavating
Position: Laborer

Tony first signed up with the TERO program in July 2022 where he worked for Suulutaaq and came with a vast amount of experience as a laborer. Tony was soon made a foreman on the project and heard about the benefits of being a part of the TERO program through other employees who worked for the same company.



Tony Gonzalez

Tony is now a key employee for K&E Excavating on the U.S. 101 Garibaldi project where his dependability, hard work, and dedication and willingness to learn new skills has earned him the January TERO Worker of the Month.

We asked Tony how TERO has helped him and he said that the program helped him find this job when he needed it most and has given him the opportunity to flourish in the field of heavy highway construction. He goes on to say that he has seen time and time again where TERO has helped Native Americans to develop their skills in the construction field and become assets to their companies, communities and great providers for their families.

We here at TERO commend Tony for his hard work and representing our program in a great way!

Congratulations to Tony for being the January 2025 TERO Worker of the Month!

**For more information on the TERO Skills Bank and any other TERO opportunities, contact the TERO office or the TERO director.
TERO Office: 503-879-1488 or tero@grandronde.org**

Tribal nonemergency text

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

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

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



hayu-munk
skukum & YEP



YOUTH STICK GAMES

Location:
9615 Grand Ronde Rd, Grand Ronde, OR 97396
Youth Education Building "J"

Join us and learn stick game, stick game songs and practice some of our cultural teachings!

Time & Dates:
01/16/25- 3:30-5:15pm
01/30/25- 3:30-5:15pm
02/11/25- 3:30-5:15pm
02/27/25- 3:30-5:15pm
03/13/25- 3:30-5:15pm

CONTACT US



503-879-2101



yep@grandronde.org




Do you need help with First, Last, and Deposit?

This program has limited funding and will be a first come, first served program.

Contact Social Services for more information
(503) 879-2034 or (800) 422-0232

You can also email us at
ssdinfo@grandronde.org





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

Attention to Tribal members with Medicare

Previously, Shasta had a contract with Medicare to automatically roll over outstanding balances once Medicare paid. At this point in time, Forest County does not have that in place, but they are working on it. It's a contract, so it's going to take some time. Be sure to take your new cards with you to give to your providers.

If you are receiving bills from your providers after Medicare processes, you can drop them off here at the clinic (patient check-in) or you can call FCP at 715-478-4610 to provide the information or you can email them if that is an option at FCPInsurance@fcp-nsn.gov.

We know this transition has been rocky and we are right in the thick of it with you. We appreciate your patience! Hopefully we'll start seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

hayu masi,
 HWC Admin



Serving urban Natives, infant to elder, in Portland and Vancouver

Open Positions

- Development and Communications Director** \$120-140K/yr
- Sexual Assault Advocate** \$29/hr
- Youth Alcohol and Drug Prevention Specialist** \$25-27/hr
- Family Parenting Support Advocate** \$25/hr
- Foster Care Support Specialist** \$24/hr
- Early Head Start Teacher (On Call)** \$18/hr



All jobs are located in Portland or Vancouver.
 Visit nayapdx.org/about/jobs to learn more.

02/15/25

Paid ad

TYPES OF IN HOME SERVICES

Home Health Care

Home health care providers services in a patient's home to treat an illness or injury. These services are provided by licensed nurses, therapists, home health aids. Insurance *may* cover home health care if the patient is homebound or needs intermittent skilled nursing or therapy (care at least once every 60 days, but no more than once a day for up to three weeks). Requires referral from healthcare provider.

SERVICES CAN INCLUDE:

- Nursing Care for wound care, medication administration, pain management, and more
- Physical, Speech, Occupational Therapy
- Activities of Daily Living Assistance
- Medication Management

Home Care Services

Home care is care that allows a person to stay in their home. It can be for people who are chronically ill, recovering from surgery and do not qualify for home health care, or have a disability, or are aging and wish to stay home. Home care services, are not covered by insurance, but covered out of pocket by the person receiving the care.

SERVICES CAN INCLUDE:

- Personal care such as helping with bathing, washing hair, or getting dressed
- Household chores such as cleaning, yard work, laundry
- Cooking or delivering meals
- Money management
- Medical transportation

Grand Ronde Community Health

Community Health provider a community approach for improving the overall health, preventing disease and reducing health disparities by addressing the whole person. Services and support is offered to Tribal Elders and Native Family Caregivers.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Medical Transportation
- Care Management
- Medication Delivery
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Life Alert Services
- Home Safety Visits
- Elder Justice Support
- Wellness Checks
- Dementia Care Support
- ER/Hospital Discharge Calls
- Any many more....

GRHWC PROJECTED tush lamatsin EVENTS 2025

January

Pajana Jam
 1/10 from 5-7pm @Tribal Gym
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 1/23 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building

February

Sweetheart's Jam
 2/13 from 5-7pm @ Tribal Gym
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 2/20 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building

March

Fresh Foods Distribution
 3/20 Start 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building

April

Earth Day Jam
 4/18 from 5-7 @ Tribal Gym
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 4/24 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building

May

Fentanyl Awareness Event
 Mother's Day Tea
 Canoe Outings
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 5/22 Starts 10:00am
 @GR Procurement Building

June

Elder Canoe Day 6/18 Location TBD
 Father's Day BBQ
 Canoe Outings
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 6/26 Starts 10:00am
 @GR Procurement Building
 June Jam 6/27 (TBD)

July

Fresh Foods Distribution
 7/17 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building
 Marcellus Norwest
 Memorial Veterans Powwow
 July 11 - 13, 2025
 @Uyxtat Powwow Ground
 Canoe Journey (tentatively)

August

Fun Run / Walk
 8/16 - Time TBD
 @Uyxtat Powwow Grounds
 3v3 Bball Collab
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 8/21 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building
 Canoe Journey (tentatively)

September

Fresh Foods Distribution
 9/18 Starts 10:00am
 @GR Procurement Building
 Every Child Matters Jam
 9/20 - Location & Time TBD
 Canoe Races (tentatively)

October

Health and Wellness Centers
 28th birthday 10/ 01
 Fresh Foods Distribution
 10/16 Starts 10:00am
 @GR Procurement Building
 Fall Festival - TBD

November

Fresh Foods Distribution
 11/20 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building

December

Fresh Foods Distribution
 12/18 Starts 10:00am
 @ GR Procurement Building

*All events are subject to change, please look out for our official fliers on the GRHWC Facebook page



HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS

Tribal dentists

Laura Hale



I was born in Manila, Philippines. My Filipino mom was working as a nurse and my dad, an American, was going to medical school. I grew up in a small town in Southern Idaho.

The claim to fame for Preston, Idaho, is that the movie “Napoleon Dynamite” was filmed there.

My daughter is grown up, graduated from law school and just makes me so proud to be her mom. Currently I have one fur baby but will most likely be searching for another Maltese in the future.

I was a registered nurse at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City for 11 years before I went back to school to become a dentist. I graduated in 2006 from Creighton Dental School in Omaha, Nebraska. I have worked in public health since then and am so blessed to have found Grand Ronde to call home. I love working with people that want to help each other become the best version of themselves. I really love being a dentist, but I really love being a dentist here.

Erin Lange

I was born and raised and currently live in Salem. I went to Sprague High School (go Olys!), attended University of Oregon for my undergraduate studies (go Ducks!) and obtained my dental degree at University of Pittsburgh (go Steelers!).

My husband and I have been married for 23 years. We have two teenagers, which keeps life interesting and busy. I’ve worked for the Grand Ronde Tribe for 14 years and worked for the Klamath Tribes for three years before moving here.

Dentistry interested me as a career because I had a lot of dental work as a child and wanted to help others to have good dental experiences like I did. I am so grateful to the Tribe and my coworkers for making this such a great place to spend 40 hours a week. You’ve made me a better dentist and truly a better person. I hope to work for the Grand Ronde Tribe for at least another 14 years!



Heather Manka



I’m from the Pacific Northwest, where I was born and raised in Yakima, Washington. After completing my undergraduate studies at Central Washington University, I lived in Guatemala for a year and a half, where I volunteered at a public hospital dental clinic. Thereafter, I completed dental school at OHSU (Class of 2016).

I integrate well with the mission of CTGR. Notably, the aspect of providing compassionate care to each and every patient. While I was in dental school, I lost my four front teeth. I know what it feels like to be a patient. This has given me a unique perspective. For this reason, among others, I strive for each patient to have a comfortable experience for the entirety of their dental visit.

For leisure, I spend time with my husband and son. We consider the Willamette Valley home, and we’re enjoying all that this community has to offer. Further, while I’m an animal lover, I especially consider myself a cat enthusiast. I have two (sphinx) cats- Seymour and Walter.



Health & Wellness Tribal DNA testing information

Clients must be fully registered with the clinic prior to the testing. It can take three to five business days once all their information is submitted.

The patient cannot schedule with the lab until after registration is complete.

Unregistered patients cannot show up with papers in hand and do the test the same day.

The link for the registration form is [registration-form-use-for-all-2023-24.pdf](#) ([grandronde.org](#)) or it can be emailed and mailed. Patients should contact registration at 503-879-1325 or 503-879-2096.

To complete registration, a copy of a state birth certificate and a copy of a parent’s Tribal identification is needed.

Registration information can be mailed to the address on the form, faxed, emailed or dropped off at the clinic.

The link for the registration form can be found on the Tribe’s main website [www.grandronde.org](#), under “Services – Health and Wellness.” The link to print the form is on the bottom of the page, called “New Patient Registration Form.”

Once everything is submitted and the registration process is complete, the patient can schedule with lab. ■

National Caregiver’s Day is Feb. 21

Each year, National Caregiver’s Day is observed on the third Friday of February to recognize and celebrate the selfless individuals who provide essential care to those in need. Whether assisting an elderly parent, supporting a child with special needs, or caring for someone recovering from illness, caregivers play a pivotal role in maintaining the well-being of our communities. This day serves as a reminder to honor their dedication and to raise awareness about the challenges they face.



Who are caregivers?

Caregivers are individuals who offer physical, emotional and often financial support to someone unable to fully care for themselves. They can be family members, friends or professional healthcare workers. Caregivers often help with tasks like bathing, dressing, meal preparation, medication management and transportation to medical appointments. Beyond these practical tasks, they also provide emotional support and companionship, which are vital to the mental health of those they care for.

The impact of caregiving

Caregiving is both a rewarding and challenging role. On the one hand, it allows caregivers to deepen their connections with their loved ones and provide meaningful support. On the other hand, it can be physically, emotionally and financially taxing. According to the Family Caregiver Alliance, many caregivers experience stress, burnout, and health problems as a result of their responsibilities. Balancing caregiving duties with work and personal life often leads to fatigue and feelings of isolation.

How to support caregivers

National Caregiver’s Day is an opportunity for everyone to show appreciation and offer support to caregivers. Here are some ways to make a difference:

1. Express gratitude: A simple thank you note or verbal acknowledgment can go a long way in boosting a caregiver’s morale.
2. Offer respite: Give caregivers a break by volunteering to take over their duties for a few hours. This can allow them to recharge and attend to their own needs.
3. Provide resources: Share information about local support groups, counseling services or community programs designed for caregivers.
4. Financial assistance: If possible, contribute to costs related to caregiving, such as medical supplies or transportation expenses.

National Caregiver’s Day is more than just a date on the calendar; it’s a call to action to recognize and uplift those who dedicate their lives to caring for others. By showing appreciation and advocating for better resources and support, we can ensure that caregivers receive the recognition and assistance they deserve. Let’s make this day a celebration of compassion, resilience and the enduring spirit of caregiving. ■



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T-SHIRT (GRAY) <small>FRONT GRAPHIC</small> \$15							
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