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JANUARY 15, 2017

Smoke Signals

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

www.grandronde.org

UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Obama signs Reservation Act amendments

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Barack Obama signed amendments to the Grand Ronde Reservation Act into law on Wednesday, Dec. 14, that streamline how the Tribe takes land into trust.

The law ends the two-step process that required the Grand Ronde Tribe to take each piece of former reservation land into trust with approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and then request that the land be designated reservation land by Congress.

The amendment will now allow the Grand Ronde Tribe to combine the two-step process for real property that is within the boundaries of its original 69,100-acre reservation established in 1857. It also stated that all real property taken into trust within the boundaries of the original reservation after Sept. 9, 1988, be considered reservation land.

Obama's signature concludes a more than six-year effort by the Tribe to end the lengthy and cumbersome process. Tribal Council Chair Reyn Leno has often said the legislation will save the Tribe and federal government time and money by streamlining the process.

The Senate bill, introduced by Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden and co-sponsored by Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley, was approved on July 14, 2016, and sent to the House of Representatives. The House bill, sponsored by Oregon Rep. Kurt Schrader, was approved on Dec. 6, 2016. ■



President
Barack Obama



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department Sgt. Rod McAllister displays a body camera that all officers in the department began wearing a few months ago.

Candid cameras

Tribal police recording officers' daily interactions

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

In an effort to be as transparent as possible, Grand Ronde Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight has ushered in a new era.

Grand Ronde Tribal police officers have been using body cameras while on duty for the last six months. Body cameras are

designed to capture the action an officer is seeing while it happens.

"It's a hot topic around the country right now and I feel like eventually it's going to be a mandatory thing," said McKnight. "I

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Winter storm forces postponement of General Council until Jan. 15

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

In reaction to the forecast of a winter storm hitting the Willamette Valley beginning on Saturday, Jan. 7, Tribal Council postponed the scheduled Sunday, Jan. 8, General Council meeting until Jan. 15.

The forecast called for snowfall to begin midday on Saturday and then freezing rain and ice to begin falling overnight on Saturday into Sunday morning with a thaw not beginning until Sunday afternoon.

Tribal Council Chief of Staff

Stacia Martin sent out a message at 11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 6, alerting everyone that the General Council meeting had been rescheduled and the Tribe's Reader Board on Grand Ronde Road and social media and Internet sites were updated to reflect the new meeting date.

Tribal Facilities Manager Tyson Mercier said the Tribal campus experienced the same weather conditions as the rest of the region – snow, freezing rain

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Community steps up to help Tribal member in fire loss

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

Tribal member Tammy Shaw knows triumph, recently experiencing the biggest victory of her life.

Sadly, Tammy also knows loss in an intimate way that comes only in tragedy.

Beating cancer after having her thyroid removed was the greatest victory.

Losing her beloved dog "Baby" in a fire that destroyed her parent's recreational vehicle three days before Christmas was her greatest loss.

Her parent's RV and adjacent

shop, which is located on Firehall Road in Grand Ronde, burned down in a fire on Thursday, Dec. 22, and will be covered by insurance the family has learned, but nothing can ever replace Tammy's dog.

"My dog was the worst part; that was like my child," said Tammy during a telephone interview on her break from work at Old Navy in Lincoln City. "She was my baby. That makes it hard. Sometimes I close my eyes and she is looking at me."

Tammy, the daughter of Wesley

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