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# Spilyay Tymoo

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SIGNS OF WINTER'S END

Pussywillows catch the rays of a spring sun along the Shitike Creek.

Spilyay Tymoo photo by Leno

(They have to be paid back)

## Error caught in rent relief refunds

by Sandy Rangila

Those who received a rent relief check from the state Department of Revenue last October (or the Oct. before) can soon expect a billing for a return of that money, plus interest, if they live on federal property.

Some reservation residents mistakenly filed for refunds they weren't entitled to under the Homeowners and Renter Relief Program (HARRP). "I think that those who filed just figured they qualified because they rent and because their income was under the specified limit," said Carol Wisner, public information officer for the state Department of Revenue.

She explained that only those residing on taxable property and who meet the eligibility standards qualify for a HARRP refund.

There will be no prosecution for fraud in this case because "we think this was purely a case of misunderstanding. There doesn't appear to be any fraudulent intent. They just didn't read far enough in the

instructions," said Wisner. For that reason no penalty charge will be added to the bill.

Under Oregon law, only property that is assessed for property taxes is eligible for tax relief. And most property on the reservation doesn't qualify, she stressed.

The dollar amounts each individual household will have to pay back vary according to their income and rental amount back in '79 and '80. But Wisner said the average check was \$230 per year and the interest charge will be one percent a month.

Interest will be computed back to when the check was received, she said. Some people received a refund in Oct. 1980, some in Oct. 1981, and some got refunds both years.

Wisner said that the revenue department's computer will be isolating ZIP codes and other identifying information about reservation property to determine which qualifies for tax relief and which doesn't.

The problem is how to separate the small amount of reservation property which is on fee patent land (and taxable)

because the ZIP code is the same throughout the reservation.

HARRP refunds issued the past two Octobers, for 1979 and 1980 applications, are being matched against the master list from the computer.

Wisner predicted that people will begin receiving billing letters this summer. For some it will be a billing letter and for others it will be a contact regarding property status — whether or not it is on fee patent land. She said that normally payment would be expected within 30 days.

"In the case of a real hardship, an individual can make payment arrangements through our collection division," said Wisner.

The computer has "kicked out" applications from ineligible properties for 1981 refunds, so they won't be issued at all. HARRP refunds made for the years before 1979 will not be reviewed because of the cost involved and because there is a statute of limitations (unless fraud is suspected).

Wisner said the state first

## Round Butte rent set

The Tribal Council issued a notice March 16 to inform tribal members that a settlement has been reached in the Round Butte rent arbitrations.

A three-man board of arbitrators established a rent of \$4.7 million per year to be paid by Portland General Electric to the Tribes for use of tribal land on which the dam is built.

The Tribes are currently receiving just over \$1 million a year in rent from PGE.

In accordance with the original agreement, the board specified that the new rent hike is to be retroactive to 1979, plus interest, to cover the five-year period to 1984.

Rent has been renegotiated every five years since 1974. The rental amounts are computed by a complex formula customarily used in power purchase agreements.

It is estimated that the impact of the new rental figure set by the board will mean an increase of only 20 cents a month to the average residential user.

In comparison, the "mothballing" of area nuclear plants is costing an average of

\$16 a month for residential users, noted tribal attorney Dennis Karnopp.

"The decision of the board represents a compromise between PGE and the Tribes," said Karnopp, referring to the adjusted rental payment.

The arbitrators were Charles Davis, former Oregon Public Utility Commissioner, selected by PGE; Abe Weissbrodt, a claims attorney from Washington, D.C., selected by the Tribes; and E. Kendall Davis, a power expert from Sacramento and former lawyer for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, mutually agreed upon by both parties in the dispute.

Hearings were held before the Board of Arbitrators in Portland Dec. 2-8, 1981. Attorneys representing the Confederated Tribes were Dennis C. Karnopp and James D. Noteboom of Johnson, Marceau, Karnopp & Peterson in Bend. Representing PGE were Alvin Alexandersen and Ron Johnson.

It is anticipated that a joint press release will be issued by the Tribes and PGE sometime next week.

## Brunoe to visit Japan

Kah-Nee-Ta general manager Garland Brunoe will be visiting Tokyo, Japan next month to attend the Pacific Northwest Tourism Mission which will be presented in cooperation with Thai Airlines.

Brunoe will join state travel directors and executive convention directors from Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Also attending will be representatives from Princess Tours, Thunderbird/Red Lion, Port of Seattle, Port of Portland, Azumano Travel Agency, Hilton Hotels and Sun Valley, Idaho. Kah-Nee-Ta was the only resort that

requested to attend the seminar.

Kah-Nee-Ta sales director Liz Apple heard of the conference and recommended to the Kah-Nee-Ta Board of Directors that Brunoe attend the five day seminar.

In addition to the seminar, all the representatives will be visiting major Japanese wholesalers, hoping to bring more Japanese tourism trade to the states. (Wholesalers are similar to American travel agencies.)

The seminar will include a

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