

BUSINESS

Entrepreneurs of the Month: Ron and Willow Rife

By Tracy Olson



Willow and Ron Rife, wearing some of their regalia.

Ron and Willow Rife are the Entrepreneurs of the Month for June. Ron, Grand Ronde tribal member, and Willow, a Siletz, will soon be opening *Cry of the Rogue at Billy's Place*, a traditional Native retail supply store in Siletz.

The shop will be located on family land, once owned by Willow's great-grandfather, Robert Metcalf.

Willow said, "That land is very special to me and my family. I feel lucky to be able to use it. Not many Indian people have a chance like this."

The Rifles have a copy of the document verifying ownership of that property to Robert Metcalf. It was originally signed by President Grover Cleveland.

Items they plan to sell in their store include beading materials, shells, tobaccos, pipes, leather and hides, and buffalo horn.

Willow was raised according to Indian tradition, and is interested in passing on those teachings to a younger tribal generation. They plan to have a classroom built on to their store and offer craft and tanning sessions to tribal and community members.

"There is more pride in making your regalia than there is in buying it or having someone make it for you," Willow said. "When someone tells me my dress is beautiful, I feel so good about myself."

Business Legal seminar offered

On June 9 the Business Development Department will sponsor "The Legal Aspects of Doing Business", a seminar designed to help you answer business questions regarding starting a corporation, the legalities of a business partnership, and personnel laws.

The seminar will be held at the Tribal Community Center and will begin at 3 p.m. Please attend for some valuable information and a little free legal advice.

The Rifles believe that following traditional beliefs and values help the self-esteem of young people, and if they feel pride and confidence in themselves, they won't turn to drugs or alcohol.

They explained that their shop will be different from others in the area, because they want to cater mostly to Native people who have a traditional or spiritual need for their services they offer.

Ron, who is currently an armed guard in the army, may leave the military soon because of health reasons.

He said, "We're in a period of transition. The plan is to move to Siletz and build *Cry of the Rogue*, but my job in the army may keep me here a while longer."

They currently live in Mulino, Oregon with their three children.

Willow and Ron have compiled a catalog of the items they have available to order. They hope to have a mail order business as well.

In addition to the shop, they have made plans with a relation to provide a food wagon on the family land as well. It will provide a variety of traditional Indian foods such as Indian tacos, salmon, seafood and wild game soups.

Willow said, "By living our lives in a traditional way, we are paying honor to our elders and our relations."

Tribal Success Story: Tom Lewis receives state loan

Tribal member Tom Lewis of Ridgefield, Washington is the proud co-owner of a new business, *Spencer RV Sales West*. Tom received a \$25,000 business loan through Key Bank via the State of Oregon's Capital Access program. *Spencer RV Sales West* is owned by Mr. Lewis and his partner, Keith Spencer, and will specialize in selling new and used travel trailers, campers, 5th wheel units, and park models (mini mobile homes). The new business will be located at 9345 Canyon Road in Portland. Until their sales lot is ready for occupancy, *Spencer West* will be selling units from Beaverton Trailer Repair, also located on Canyon Road.

Being a business owner is new to Tom Lewis. For the last six years Tom has been General Manager of *Spencer RV Sales* located on the east side of Portland. With 20 years experience in the RV market, he has knowledge of the market products, and the financial considerations of operating a dealership. Tom says he has always managed *Spencer RV Sales* like it was his own business, but knew he wasn't ultimately responsible for it. Now he is.

Now he will be able to feel pride



Tom Lewis

and a sense of accomplishment as well as future economic security. But for now, Tom says being his own boss hasn't really sunk in.

"It didn't really hit me until I got to the bank, but then I got really excited," Tom said.

The challenges he faces now are: getting into a new marketing area, and getting the new sales lot opened up. Tom and his partner are working with Washington County to get the lot opened up onto Canyon Boulevard, so they can set up their office modular and move on to inventory. *Spencer West* will employ three full-time people.

Small Business Development staff members assisted Tom in obtaining financing by guiding him through the process and helping him answer questions. Before he came to the Tribe, Tom had contacted other financing agencies and received negative feedback. Small Business Development gave him hope and encouragement. The business plan document was produced with the help of Small Business as well. Tom and the bankers who reviewed the plan were all impressed with its quality.

Small Business gave Tom information about the Capitol Access Program (CAP), which is funded by the state Economic Development Department, and administered by local banks. All three lenders Tom approached about CAP were enthusiastic about it. The loan turnaround time was fast, too. After one week, he had the decision, and after two weeks, Tom received a check.

Small Business Development would like to congratulate Tom Lewis for pursuing his dream, and paving a successful road for himself and his family.

Business Registry: sign up now

If you are a tribal member waiting to do business with Spirit Mountain Development Corporation, you can become part of the tribal business registry.

To contract Spirit Mountain on any future projects, your business needs to be registered with the Tribal Small Business Development Department.

Tribal member businesses that are not registered will not be considered for bid. Small Business Development will be responsible for maintaining a list of current tribal businesses, assisting them in meeting bid requirements, and sending bid packets to eligible members.

Register now! Call Debby at 1-800-422-0232 for more information about the registry, and getting your business involved.

Computer training schedule

The Business Development Department is offering several computer training classes in June. Space is limited to three people per class, so call Debby and reserve a spot now. The numbers are: 879-2476 or 1-800-422-0232. If you are interested in a specific computer training not offered, call and make an appointment with a staff member.

BASIC COMPUTERS: Come learn the basics of the computer. We cover an overview of the computer, learn to use the mouse, and do a brief overview of Word For Windows. Instructor: Shelley Hanson. Offered June 6 10-noon, and June 22 6-8 p.m.

WORD FOR WINDOWS: Word for Windows is an easy to use, quick learn word processing system. If you are wanting to write letters or memos, or create reports, Word for Windows is an ideal program for those projects. Instructor: Mitch Conley. Offered June 21 1-3 p.m., and June 29 1-3 p.m.

QUICKEN: If you are looking for a simple, inexpensive accounting program, Quicken is for you. You can use Quicken to write checks and maintain your personal or business books. If you have ever considered a computerized system, check this program out. Instructor: Elaine Moore. Offered June 22 1-3 p.m.

MICROSOFT EXCEL: Microsoft Excel is a spreadsheet system. Please join us and learn how it can meet your business and personal information needs. Instructor: Elaine Moore. Offered June 27 2-5 p.m.

Personal photos offered at pow-wow

Spectra Productions will be offering individual and group photos at the 1994 pow-wow in August. The itemized list below is designed to give interested parties an indication of cost and packages.

- Package 15A: 2-5x7 and 8 Wallets
or
- Package 15B: 2-5x7 and 2-3 1/2x5 and 4 wallets (\$15.00)
- Package 20A: 2-8x10s and 8 Wallets
or
- Package 20B: 4-5x7s and 8 wallets (\$20.00)
- Package 25A: 2-8x10s and 2-5x7s and 12 wallets
or
- Package 25B: 2-8x10s and 4-5x7s and 4 wallets (\$25.00)