



# SMOKE SIGNALS

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

February 15, 1996

**General Council Meeting**  
Sunday, March 3, 1996, 11:30 a.m.  
Tribal Community Center  
All Tribal Members Welcome

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## Martha Jane offerings donated to Head Start

On Monday, February 12 at 9 a.m., the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community and Spirit Mountain Casino donated the first collection of financial offerings left at the statue of Martha Jane Sands to three local Head Start programs to assist in the education and development of local children. In addition, the Casino matched the statue offerings, currently over \$2,000, as part of the donation to the Head Start programs. The presentation took place in front of the statue, located just inside the entrance to the Casino.

Ed Larsen, a member of Tribal Council, presented the checks, each for \$1,350, to representatives of the Head Start centers in Yamhill County. The Yamhill County Head Start, a division of the Community Action Agency of Yamhill County (YCAP) Inc., directs the Head Start programs throughout Yamhill County, including those receiving the initial donations: Grand Ronde, Willamina and McMinnville.

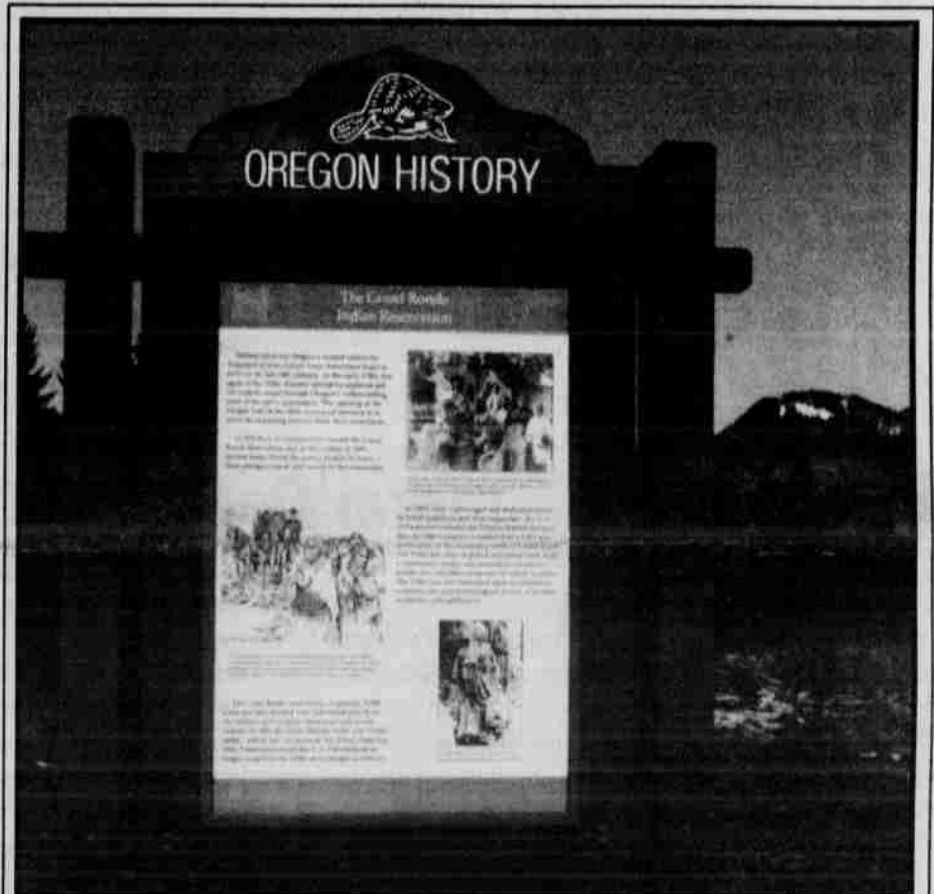
Also present, representing Spirit Mountain Casino, was Mike Larsen, the President of the Board of Directors for Spirit Mountain Development Corporation, and Michael Eichman, Director of Head Start in Yamhill County. Several parents of children attending the programs were also present. June Olson, the family advocate for the Grand Ronde Head Start; Susan Randall, a teacher for the Willamina Head Start; and Jane Hile, a teacher for the McMinnville Head Start, accepted the checks.

Offerings to Martha Jane, which have varied from bouquets of flowers to cash donations, usually in the form of coins, began appearing at the base of the bronze statue shortly after the casino opened in mid-October 1995. "In many cultures, including our Tribe's, people make offerings to the departed to honor their spirits or for personal good fortune," explains Bruce Thomas, President of Spirit Mountain Gaming, the parent company of the Casino.

Although the offerings are spontaneous and have not been encouraged by the Casino, the cash donations have continued to accumulate, reaching over \$2,000 by early February. "We agreed, given the symbolism of the statue, that the offerings should be donated to a charity that benefits disadvantaged children in our area," Thomas said. The initial donation will be divided equally among the three Head Starts. Future donations will be given to a different Head Start program each month, rotating among both those in the local communities and those in surrounding communities, such as Dallas, Newberg and Salem. The casino will continue to match the amount each month as part of the donation.

Martha Jane Sands, portrayed in the statue with her granddaughter, Gertrude at her side, symbolizes the proud spirit of the Grand Ronde Tribe. A survivor of the infamous "Trail of Tears," Martha Jane later became a renowned basketweaver and an inspiration to her people. This statue, by sculptor Rip Caswell, portrays the passing of tribal culture and traditions from generation to generation.

**PICTURED AT RIGHT:** Tribal Council member Ed Larsen presented representatives from the McMinnville, Willamina, and Grand Ronde Head Start Centers with checks for \$1,350. From left: June Olson, Susan Randall, and Jane Hile.



**OREGON HISTORY MARKER MOVED:** The informational marker has been relocated to provide a safer place to pull off Highway 18 to view it. It is now located one block west of Grand Ronde Road, between Bonanza Restaurant and Seaway Market, on the Highway. As you can see above, its new location includes a scenic view of Spirit Mountain in the background.

