



SMOKE SIGNALS

"The events of today — the history of tomorrow."

Gaming revenue questions answered at meeting

Tribal members can feel little doubt about the success of Spirit Mountain Casino after the update given to the membership at the General Council meeting on April 6.

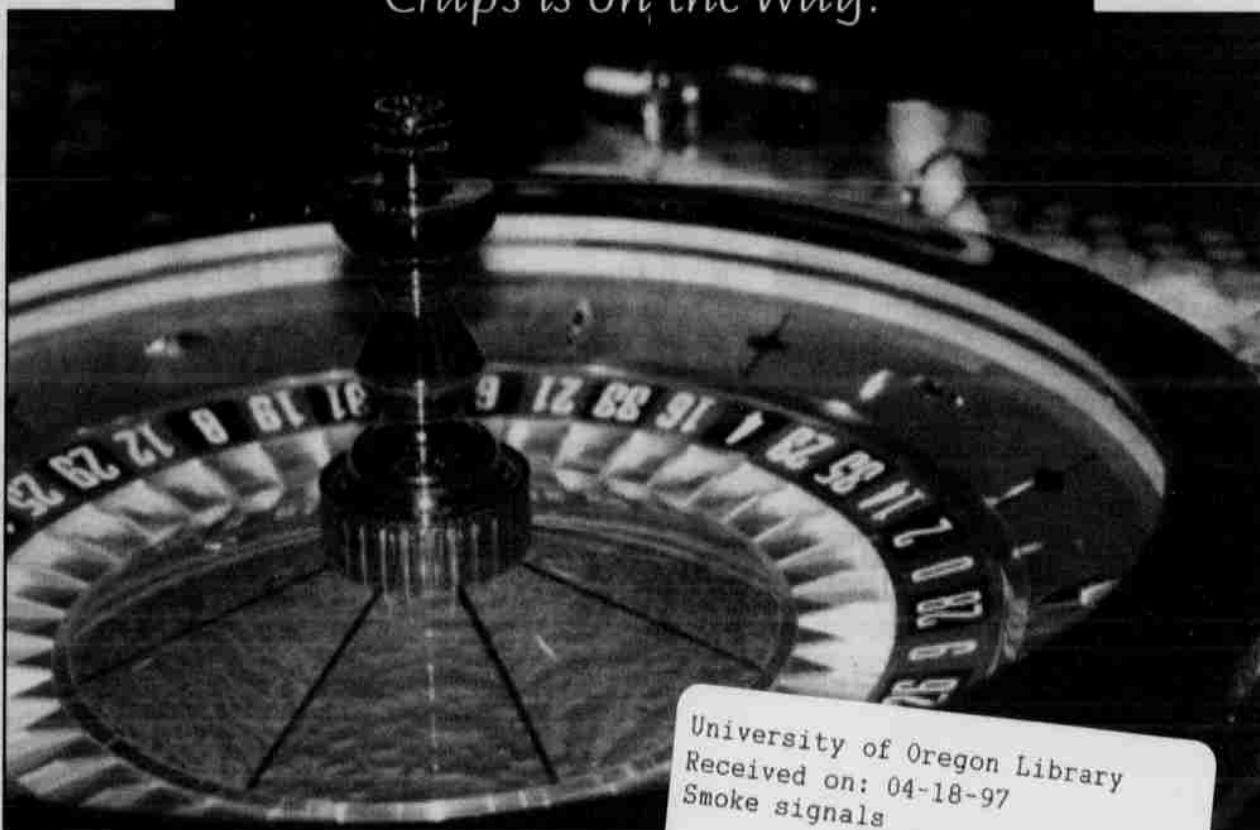
Bruce Thomas told the membership of the Casino's plans for expansion, including using the Strawberry Patch land for more parking. There will be more restaurant seats inside the Casino, and the hotel construction will begin this spring. The Casino currently offers roulette, and the craps tables will appear in June.

Francis Somday, Pat Mercier, and Greg Archuleta explained the Members' Benefit Fund and where some of the gaming revenue is being used. Pat Mercier, the Tribe's Fiscal Officer, explained some of the balances in the youth Trust Fund, and how much interest has collected in one year. Greg Archuleta, Administrative Officer, said that there are some things that could eventually reduce the amount of profit from the Casino like federal taxation. It is important to keep in mind that just because the Tribe has entered into an agreement with the state to share a percentage of Casino revenues, that doesn't mean that all tribes with gaming operations won't be taxed in the future. Also, the number of new members is increasing all the time. The number of enrolled tribal members can affect how much is allocated for the Members' Investment Fund. The presenters then answered questions from the membership regarding the gaming revenue.

Staff from the Tribal Family Action Program (TFAP) presented the membership with information regarding fam-

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*Roulette is now a gaming feature
at Spirit Mountain Casino.
Craps is on the way.*



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Smoke signals

Deputies ask for help in accident prevention



By Deputy Jeff VanLaanen

After what seemed like forever, on February 22, we finally received a weekend of beautiful, sunny weather. Along with this great weather came the traffic to the coast, and once again, with the traffic came death. One more unfortunate addition to an ever growing group of statistics along the deadly stretches of highways 18 and 22.

I have been working in the Grand Ronde area for almost two years now. In this short amount of time I have seen far too many deaths and serious injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents. Many of the locals call this stretch of highway "Death Alley" and they might be right. According to the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) figures, the problems on the roadways are getting worse.

Between 1993 and 1995 there were 395 accidents on highways 18 and 22. There were 397 people injured, and 19 were killed. These figures may appear severe, but in fact, they are even worse. These totals do not reflect the most recent increase in traffic on these roads, from 1996-1997. The combination of population and recreational growth in the northwest portion of the state has overcrowded these major state highways to the coast.

What can we all do to help reduce these numbers? The Oregon Department of Transportation along with the Polk County Sheriff's Office, the State Police, and Yamhill County have created a "Traffic Safety Corridor" along the most dangerous 15 miles of Highway 18. The Law Enforcement agencies have been aggressively enforcing traffic laws in this area. This "aggressive enforcement" can help slow people down and reduce accidents, but these effects are only temporary. A 1996 traffic survey along this highway indicates that traffic volume has increased approximately 30% over the prior year. This survey also shows

that over 16,500 vehicles travel this small section of the highway every day.

We must change the attitudes and habits of the offending drivers. Nearly 50% of all these reported accidents had excessive speed listed as its primary cause. Nearly all of the fatal accidents had alcohol involved. It appears that if we all maintained the speed limit, and refrained from drinking and driving, we could cut our traffic accidents in half, and nearly eliminate fatal accidents.

We are asking you to help. Some things you can do to reduce accidents includes slowing down. The time you save by driving 70 miles per hour as opposed to 55 m.p.h. is not worth your life or someone else's. Be patient and attentive. Hasty, dangerous driving and passing is a major cause of accidents. Never operate a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. If you own a cellular phone, use it to advise police about dangerous/intoxicated drivers. For more information please feel free to contact the Polk County Sheriff's Office, or the Grand Ronde substation.