

Grand Ronde Deputy promoted

By Deputy Jeff VanLaanen

It is with mixed emotions that I write this article for *Smoke Signals*. On one hand I am saddened to inform you that I will soon be leaving the Grand Ronde district. On the other hand, I am happy to announce that I have been promoted to the rank of Sergeant. My new position requires me to leave the Grand

Ronde patrol district and substation. Soon I will be working out of the main Polk County Sheriff's Office, located in Dallas.

I wish to thank the community, the Tribe, and the many individuals who have made working in Grand Ronde such a great experience. In the year and a half I have served Grand Ronde, I have seen growth and many positive changes in our community. I am proud to have been part of these changes and a member of this community. Although I will have new duties and responsibilities that will take up much of my time, I hope to continue working with the Tribe and the Grand Ronde community as much as possible.



Deputy VanLaanen, center, with Council members Ed Larsen, (left) and Reyn Leno at the Lazer Gun Demonstration.

Soon Deputy O'Brien and I will be introducing you to the deputy that will be replacing me. I am certain you will welcome him or her as you have welcomed me. I will make every effort to stay in touch with all of you. Feel free to contact me at my new location or call me at (503) 629-9251. Thank you again for making me a part of this community, for all the friendships developed, and for all the experiences we have shared. I look forward to serving you from my new role in the future.

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E-Mail us via Internet:
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OLD ADDRESS:

NEW ADDRESS:

Substance Abuse and Gun Violence

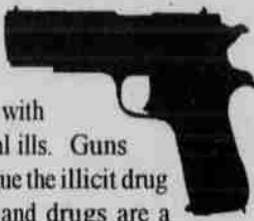
Substance abuse is closely linked with gun violence as it is with many other social ills. Guns and violence plague the illicit drug market; alcohol and drugs are a common component to suicides, homicides, and domestic violence.

Many individuals in the fight against substance abuse deal with issues of gun violence prevention and public safety daily.

There is no dispute that gun violence has become a major public health epidemic in our country. Here are a few facts:

- A gun takes the life of a child approximately every two hours — up to fifteen kids a day.
- Gunfire has taken the lives of over 800,000 Americans in the past 25 years. Almost 40,000 lives were ended by gun violence in 1994 alone.
- Between 1975 and 1991, nearly 50,000 children were killed by firearms — a total equivalent to the number of American battle casualties in the Vietnam War.
- There was a 79% increase in the number of 10-17 year olds who used firearms to commit murder between 1980 and 1990.
- One of every 33 U.S. high school students carried a handgun during one month in 1991.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

How can a person attend one General Council meeting and be able to make statements against our most precious assets, our Elders. Our Elders are the reasons why we are where we are today, tribally and otherwise. Where would we be without the hard work the Elders have volunteered through the years? As I grew up, I watched them working at our Pow-wow, baking for our fund-raisers, and teaching our children.

They were here at termination, went through the tough times. We owe much to our Elders. They shouldn't be made to feel ungrateful or a "greedy" few who were here. Who did their fair share of hard work toward us being restored? The active tribal members — our Elders. They did fund-raisers to hire lawyers, fund-raisers to support office space, telephones, and travel for our Council members to represent us in the restoration effort.

Our people are coming home! Everyday the tribal offices get phone calls from tribal members who want to come home, who ask about housing and job availability. Our people are coming from all directions, using the tribal programs until they can get on their feet. I chose to live away from home for many years and knew that all we got was Direct Care from another tribal clinic. Now, my children and I, and my grandchildren are here at home. We had to stay with family until we got on our feet. And it has been worth it...to live here and be a part in our tribe's success, to see our people once again proud.

When the housing project started, the meetings many attended, the priority of the Tribal Council was for our Elders to apply for housing first and to make it affordable. Some of our Elders live on very little a month. They have earned many times over the right to a little extra, as they worked to get us where we are today. The Elders have volunteered their sweat and time to get us recognized as a tribe again. They deserve to have a little joy and security in the little bit of time they have left.

We have been taught from a very early age to respect our Elders, and I am proud to say that I do.

Respectfully,
Sharon Hutton

Editor's Note

Last month, *Smoke Signals* ran a story about the Sande Schmidt memorial hosted by the Tribe. In our story, we neglected to mention Sande's friends from the Burns Paiute Tribe who were also here to celebrate Sande's life with friends and colleagues. We regret this oversight.

To the Editor:

Thank you so much for the great job you did arranging medical help for our mother and sister — Gloria Engleson (Hudson). We were amazed at the speed and efficiency with which all of the details were handled. Everything from travel arrangements, hotels, doctors transferring medical records, and obtaining maps and directions in Houston. You will never know what a relief it was to be able to turn over these technicalities and know they were being taken care of so that we could concentrate on her care and the details involved with an extended absence.

We appreciated all the expressions of concern for Gloria's well-being. It was encouraging to know that others were thinking of us during this time.

Our trip to Houston went just as planned and the surgery was a success. None of this would have been possible without the financial aid that was provided by the Tribe. We are looking forward to many more years of health and vitality with Gloria. Thank you for your part in all this. We couldn't have done it without your help and support.

Sincerely,
Kelly Haggerty and family
Rod Risteen and family
Shelly Whitley and family
Missy Ault
Larry Risteen
Grace Brown and family
May Amerson and family

Editorial Policy

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS:

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Letters must be printed or typed, and cannot exceed 300 words. *Smoke Signals* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain libelous statements or personal attacks. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Smoke Signals*, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

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