Tribal Court expands rules

By Katharine English

Tribal Court Chief Judge

The Grand Ronde Tribe has recently expanded the jurisdiction of its Tribal Court. For several months the Court, with assistance from the Tribe's Legal Department, has been studying various Court Rules of other Oregon tribes, Oregon Rules of the Court, Federal Rules of the Court, and evidence codes in an effort to determine the rules under which the Grand Ronde Tribe could operate most thoroughly. In conjunction with legal staff, and having notified the Tribal Council, the Court hereby promulgates the rules below.

Effective January 1, 1999, all cases filed in the Tribal Court of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon shall be governed by rules and procedures as follows:

1 Effective to all cases filed on or after January 1, 1999, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde hereby adopt, as the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Tribal Court Rules of Civil Procedure, the Rules of the U.S. District Court of the District of Oregon, and the Federal Rules of Evidence, as they currently exist, and as they may from time to time be amended, with the following exceptions and provisos.

2 The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde do not specifically adopt any rules which reference admiralty and maritime claims, jury trials, class actions, derivative actions, or masters.

A "legal holiday" shall mean those days that are paid legal holidays for tribal employees as set forth in the personnel rules of the Tribe or as delineated by the Tribal Council.

3 Where the United States is named, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde shall be substituted, as appropriate.

4 The Tribal Court retains discretion to modify the application of any rule in any particular case when it is impracticable or impossible to apply the rule as written or in the interests of justice.

5 The Tribal Court shall interpret the rules in a manner consistent with the Constitution and ordinances of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and with the fair administration of justice.

Memory Bricks offered again: Last day to purchase is January 31.

Did you forget to buy a Memory Brick for the entrance of the Health and Wellness Center? You still can! The bricks will be laid in the Spring, so there will be no more opportunities to buy one. They are $50. Call Diane Lane at (503) 876-4804 or Patti Tom-Martin at the tribal offices, 1-800-422-0232, to buy a brick in the name of a family or loved one.

Language rebirth

Continued from page 4

Linguists use what Johnson calls an Americanist Phonetic alphabet while both Native Chinook speakers and early non-Indian compilers of the language used intuition and English letters to write Chinook-Wawa.

The problem with this latter method is that in Native Chinook there are at least 20 sounds which can not be clearly represented with an English alphabet, Johnson says.

"You can't pick up one of those old dictionaries and pronounce Chinook. They just don't have the letters," explains Johnson. "None of those dictionaries represent Chinook as spoken by Indians."

Johnson began researching the database and other resources.

He soon devised the first ever Indian Chinook-Wawa alphabet by re-mapping Americanist Phonetic characters to accurately represent the unique pronunciations of spoken Chinook.

With the database and alphabet in place and with the help of some special computer software, Johnson is already using an abbreviated lexicon of Chinook words as part of the curriculum for the Tribe's language class.

He hopes that by fall the first fully edited Chinook-Wawa dictionary compiled by and for Native Americans will be published.

"We need a dictionary to facilitate learning the language," he says. "It's by no means done but (getting this far) was a huge hurtle."

Theories on the propagation of Chinook-Wawa vary.

While some believe it was spread by non-Indian traders, Johnson says that some form of the language was in widespread use long before they came. He notes Chinook's distinctly Indian sound system.

He also argues that a common Northwest Indian language was essential because tribes with different languages and dialects intermarried, traded and occasionally enslaved members of neighboring tribes.

Fluency in multiple languages was common but the diversity of languages in the Northwest made it impossible to know them all.

"It seems real obvious that a pidgin or creole language would be needed," says Johnson who notes that Captain James Cook's 1778 voyage to Canada's west coast and Lewis and Clark's 1806 Oregon trek both encountered tribes already using Chinook-Wawa.

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>
> *~ Tony Johnson*
> *Language Specialist*

By the 19th century, western tribes from southern British Columbia to the Oregon-California border and as far east as the Rockies used Chinook-Wawa as a second language, Johnson says.

He says remnants of the language can be found as far north as Alaska where locals still use the Chinook word 'Chee Chako' for newcomer, to Northwestern U.S. place names such as 'Tumwater,' Washington and 'Ecola,' Oregon. Both are Chinook for "thumping water" and "whale" respectively.

But he says tribes that moved to the Grand Ronde reservation in the mid 1800s "had a real opportunity with Chinook.

"It was really well developed," says Johnson. "It was mostly a language used by adults but here it became one of the first languages of children. When a pidgin language does that, it evolves. It becomes a creole."

Johnson believes the Tribe's unique history with Chinook-Wawa can help revive the language to benefit more than just Grand Ronde.

"As far as I'm concerned, reviving Chinook-Wawa has so much more potential than reviving other languages," says Johnson acknowledging that, "we all know we have other older languages."

"The work that we do can be applied to a lot of tribes who want to communicate with other tribes in an Indian language, and we should save them, but the work we are doing can allow tribes with different languages to once again communicate intertribally with an Indian language. This is what Chinook did in the past and what it can do in the future."

More Education Notes...

Ed. Committee seeking members

Applications are being accepted for two openings on the Education Committee, which meets one evening a month with some weekend events. Two planning sessions a year are held — one during the summer before school starts and one in February to keep on target.

Education is very important to the committee at all levels. This is a hard working group which needs more help. For more information, contact Darlene Aaron at 876-5795. For a committee application, please contact Lauri Smith at 879-2301.

Scholarships Now!

Intertribal Timber Council offers a Truman D. Picard Scholarship to students in a college natural resources program. **The deadline to apply is Feb. 1, 1999.** For more information call: (503) 282-4296.

The Oregon State Higher Education System schools have available the Diversity Building Scholarship applications, 1999-2000. If you plan to attend one of Oregon's eight colleges and universities, please contact the school and request a scholarship application. The Diversity Building Scholarship is a tuition remission scholarship with awards ranging from partial to full tuition fee waivers.

Higher Education program students:

■Please remember to submit a copy of your class schedule at the beginning of each term/semester and a copy of your grade report at the conclusion of each term/semester. Failure to send these documents will result in a delay of mailing your award to the school.

■Now is the time to file your 1999-2000 Federal Financial Aid application. Continuing students are required to submit a copy of the application to the Tribal Education Higher Ed. Program by **February 15, 1999.**

■If you plan to enter school Spring Term 1999, you need to submit a completed Tribal Program application to the Education Division by **February 1, 1999.** Deadline dates to apply for either Higher Education program funding or Adult Vocational Training program funding is as follows:
Spring Term 1999: **February 1, 1999;** Fall Term/Fall Semester 1999: **July 1, 1999;** Winter Term/Fall Semester 2000: **November 1, 1999.**

These deadlines are established to allow time to process the application and compete a budget analysis with the school. It takes between 30 to 60 days to get a file together in order to determine eligibility. If you plan to attend school in the near future you are encouraged to file a Federal Financial Aid Application now by calling Marion Mercier at 1-800-422-0232.