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September
15, 1999

CHASTA
UMPQUA
MOLALLA
KALAPUYA
ROGUE RIVER

SMOKE SIGNALS



A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

SEPTEMBER 15, 1999

ELECTION RESULTS

The Confederated Tribes
of Grand Ronde
Tribal Council Election
September 11, 1999

Candidates	Total Votes
*Reynold Leno	335
*Earl (Butch) LaBonte	292
*June Sell-Sherer	280
Cheryle Kennedy	244
Eugene LaBonte	236
Jan Denton Reibach	229
Mark Mercier	217
Margaret Provost	189
Lottie Child	186
Joann Mercier	177
Kathy Aicher (Tom)	160
Orrin (Bud) White	157
J. Ken Gregg	112
Dean Mercier	79
Alan Ham	53
Shawn Hostler	52

*Newly elected Council members.

Keepers of our Forest



A group from the Forest Service and the Tribe met at Tom's camp in a clearing which was thought to be a possible hunting area for Native people.

Story and more photos on pages 4-5

Photo by Kim Mueller

New camera aids in early diabetes detection

■ Paid for with grant monies, the Fundus Camera is unique in Oregon.

By Amanda Siestroom

Hidden away in one arm of the Health and Wellness Center there is a little office where optometrist Jerry Sherer has been working. He is stalking the illness that has been plaguing Indian country for the last three generations: diabetes. The recent acquisition of the Fundus Camera, a state of the art retinal photographing system unique in the Northwest, has furthered diabetes detection by light years.

Native People are hit by diabetes harder than any other group of people. Due to the changes in eating and exercise which have occurred so rapidly, people are walking less and eating more. The Tribe

plans to hire a dietician to work one day a month who is trained specifically in diabetes planning, and to continue developing educational materials. This process of education, aimed at the younger population, allows the Tribe to prevent the onset of diabetes.

But the largest population of tribal members involved need direct care, daily monitoring and support for their existent diabetes. When Jerry Sherer happened to see the flier for the diabetes grant on a flip chart, he remembered the grants he had worked under before, and notified Bonnie Tom, director of the Tribe's Wellness program. Tom, with her staff, knew what they wanted and what the community needed and sent their plan to be written into a grant. Sherer submitted a request for a camera valued at some \$15,000.

With the new camera very early changes in the blood vessels in the back of the eye can alert doctors to a

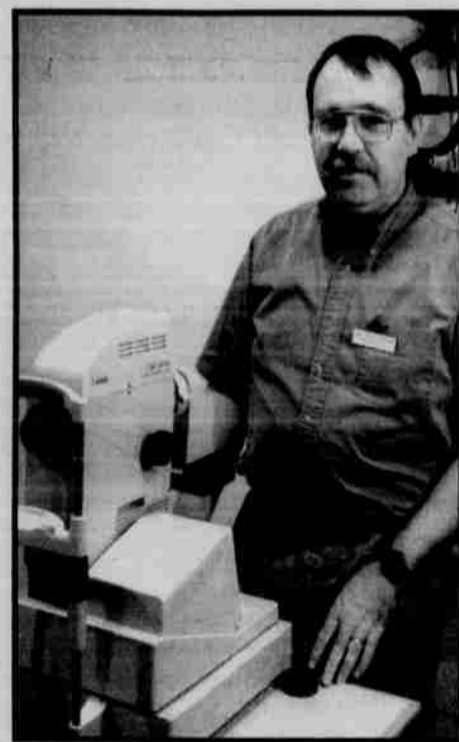
problem. Diabetes causes the blood vessels to leak and new and weaker ones to grow. The blood then can float to the center of vision, the Macula, and cause blindness.

But that diabetes grant is allowing victims of diabetes to fight back. Diabetes affects the entire circulatory system, often damaging the eyes, kidneys, feet, gums and heart. When allowed to run wild, diabetes will cause severe damage ranging from blindness and loss of limbs to death.

The battle the Tribe is waging will tackle many fronts. With the five-year grant monies from the Indian Health Service, the Tribe looks to education, prevention and monitoring of existing cases.

The very design of the Health and Wellness Center is suited to the diabetes education, as the upstairs classroom is equipped with a kitchen to be used in the cooking demonstrations. Battling diabetes is largely in the arena of diet, to maintain a balanced blood sugar level. The kitchen even has a six-by-five foot mirror over top of the cooking range to facilitate the students in viewing the process.

Education has taken the form of a new program, one of only four other such programs in the United States. The program, lead by a Nambe Pueblo woman, Georgia Perez, was inspired from a dream the New Mexico woman had of an eagle. The education through this program of two groups of six tribal members and



Optometrist Jerry Sherer

Photo by Amanda Siestroom

their spouses will begin in October.

Sherer has been at the clinic since January 1998 and he has seen many changes for the better. He said some of his patients will have to search a little bit to find him now, since his offices were just moved.

Sherer currently works at the Chemawa clinic three days a week, at Siletz clinic for one day and at Grand Ronde for one day. He has worked for the Indian Health Service since 1975. Having been employed on the Blackfeet Reservation, Sherer was familiar with the importance of early detection and consistent monitoring. His focus is on

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