



Cultural site ready for visitors

By Brent Merrill

"I wish my grandpa were alive to see this," said Tribal Lands Specialist Jan Michael Reibach of the Tribe's new cultural site. "I remember when he (Harris Reibach) used to sit me on his knee and tell me about how the Tribe was terminated and how in the 1950's it wasn't cool to be Indian. He told me how you would have to go in your back yard to practice anything Native American. Here we are now, and we have this site, this beautiful area and I bet he would just love it down there. The site isn't hidden. As a matter of fact, we are showcasing it."

The Tribe's new permanent cultural site just west of the Pow-wow grounds is nearly complete, and will be home to circle talks, drumming, naming ceremonies, language teaching, story telling, field trips and sweat lodge ceremonies.

The physical area is a circle in a



Elders and Tribal Council hope the area is well-used by tribal members.

Photo by Brent Merrill

New changes at clinic will help with patient wait time

By Brent Merrill

The Tribe's newly remodeled health clinic is now designed to be more efficient at serving patients and eliminate long patient waits.

According to Clinic Administrator John Casale, the check-in window will be remodeled and split into two windows — one for patients with appointments and the other side will serve walk-in patients.

Casale said the split-window will allow staff to better serve patients by eliminating the bottleneck that can sometimes happen at the window.

New exam rooms are being set up and remodeled and an Elders' foot care program and some chiropractic services will now be available with the remodel.

Casale seemed proud of the new remodel and said he hopes the change will allow staff to better serve the patients who visit the facility.

"One of our biggest concerns here has been that there is just too long of a patient wait time when people get here," said Casale. "You would expect in any type of clinic you go

into that there will be a wait time for various reasons — like a physician is out doing surgery or he had an emergency at a hospital somewhere — but our physicians are not gone for those reasons — they are not gone due to emergencies."

Casale said there are always going to be times when a doctor has to take longer with a patient than initially scheduled, but he felt there had to be a way to streamline the process and improve patient wait times.

"The question I kept asking myself was 'how come we keep having these long patient wait times?'" said Casale. "When we investigated and actually sat down there and watched, was that we have an unusually high percentage of walk-in patients here in this facility."

After he and his staff looked at the situation, it became clear that the community was coming to the clinic when they didn't feel well and because members knew they could just walk-in, they weren't calling in for appointments as frequently as other

communities with similar facilities.

People who come to the clinic for their annual exam or to have a simple medical procedure like having a wart removed or a mole diagnosed tend to call in and make an appointment. Casale said when members don't feel well they come to the clinic and want to feel better as soon as possible.

Casale, educated and trained in the traditional, non-Indian medical community, said dealing with the difference in the cultural tendencies of the community here in Grand Ronde has been challenging and rewarding.

"We can educate people about what they should schedule appointments for, but we will always have that high volume of walk-in patients here and we are prepared for that," said Casale. "What I have seen in the facilities I have been involved with before and what exists in some of the other Indian health facilities we have looked at, is a triage system that will point people in the direction they should be going and get them helped as soon as possible."

A triage system is set up to give patients a quick diagnosis of their problem. A full-time triage nurse will be at the desk so receptionists aren't put in a position of having to determine the severity of a patient's condition or medical needs.

According to Casale, the triage system would streamline the current patient process and decrease the wait time. The triage nurse will be experienced and able to take care of

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Natural Resources to hold tribal community meetings

The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Natural Resources Department, announces three tribal member meetings to be held on December 1, 2, and 7, 1999. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss a 10 year integrated Natural Resources Plan and an Environmental Assessment. All tribal members are invited to attend.

Natural Resources will provide information about its current management activities on reservation land and solicit comments to be included or excluded in the next Management Plan. Tribal members are encouraged to provide comments to the Tribe to be incorporated into the scope of the Environmental Assessment. Individuals who are not able to attend in person may submit written comments to: The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Natural Resources Department, P.O. Box 10, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

Tribal members who plan to attend any of the meetings listed below are requested to RSVP to 1-800-422-0232, ext. 5522.

**WED., DEC. 1 — TIGARD
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

**Howard Johnson Express Inn
(Pacific Room) 11460 SW Pacific Hwy.
Take I-5 exit 294 (from either direction);
go west on Hwy 99W**

**THURS., DEC. 2 — SPRINGFIELD
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

**Comfort Suites, 969 Kruse Way
Take I-5 exit 195A; go east**

**TUES., DEC. 7 — GRAND RONDE
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

**Spirit Mountain Casino
(Kalapuya Room B)
27100 SW Salmon River Hwy**

**Current management practices,
see page 6**



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