

# SMOKE SIGNALS



A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

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## 1999 wrap-up, what a year!

By Tracy Dugan

**H**appy New Year, and Welcome the year 2000! Some great new things happened for the Tribe in 1999. Here's a review of the major events.

### LATE WINTER

After a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony, Spirit Mountain Lodge opens its doors, to immediate success as the third phase of Spirit Mountain Casino is completed.

Tribal members are invited to a Grand Opening Ceremony for the Lodge.

An ad hoc committee is formed to organize the creation of a Veterans' memorial in Grand Ronde.

### SPRING

Tribal Council announces that the BIA will conduct a special election of the Grand Ronde membership. The election will determine whether or not to amend the Tribe's Enrollment Ordinance.

The Tribe sponsors a retirement dinner for Congresswoman Elizabeth Furse, who was the Restoration Coordinator for the Tribe, and was a key player in the Tribe's Restoration effort.

Tribal Council announces its affiliation with MaPS Credit Union. All tribal members and employees become eligible to join the credit union.

Russellville Commons, an upscale Portland housing project in which the Tribe is an investor, is completed.

The Tribe settles its dispute with the Grand Ronde Community Water Association over the cost and terms on which water is supplied to Grand Meadows, the Tribe's manufactured home subdivision.

Nanitch Sahallie Youth Treatment Facility in Keizer, Oregon celebrates ten years of helping tribal youth overcome drug and alcohol dependency.

### SUMMER

Elders and Council participate in the groundbreaking of the Elders' Housing development, currently under construction.

The Tribe hosts the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) conference at the casino and lodge.

Direlle Calica is selected to be the second Hatfield Fellow, and will

*continued on page 4*

## Community Fund helps a variety of non-profits in 1999

By Brent Merrill

The Grand Ronde Tribe's Spirit Mountain Community Fund distributed \$1.8 million throughout the state last year.

1999 grants ranged from \$270,000 to the Raphael House in Portland to \$2,500 for the Oregon State Parks Trust. The grants covered the entire community spectrum with grants to the arts community, various ethnic groups and emergency services, law enforcement, education and health organizations.

Recipients of the fund have been thankful and appreciative of the Tribe's efforts.

"The Spirit Mountain Community Fund has found a wonderful way to give to the community," Ginnie Cooper, director of libraries for Multnomah County. "The fund's gift to the library ensures that books and special programs about Indians of the Northwest and throughout the country will be available to all."

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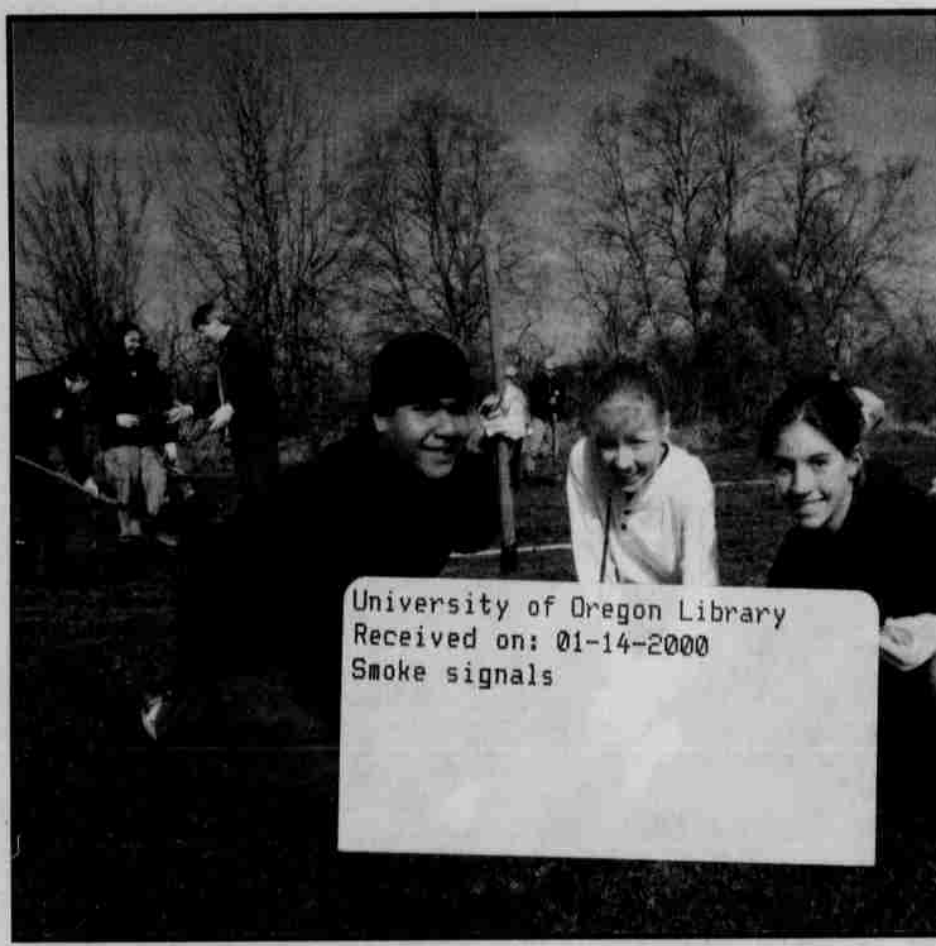


Photo by Dale Peterson

Planting seedlings during the Willamette River Initiative in March.

## Two Council will serve on transportation committee

By Brent Merrill

Making local highways safer is just one of the priorities a new transportation advisory committee (TAC) in Yamhill County will be looking at when they begin work this year.

Grand Ronde Tribal Council members Ed Larsen and Butch LaBonte will serve on the TAC.

Surveys have been sent in the mail to 4,000 Yamhill County residents to get their input on public transportation issues. The surveys were sent randomly to 10 percent of the county's registered voters.

The information gathered in the surveys could help plan the future of public transportation in Yamhill County for years to come.

In the summer of 1999, Yamhill County contacted the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG) about doing a transit study for the county. A transit study examines public transportation like buses and all other forms

of public transportation.

"We have formed a citizen's transportation advisory committee of some 20 members," said Richard Van Orman of MWVCOG. "Basically, what we are going to be doing is a public transportation study for the county. We will probably be working on this throughout the year."

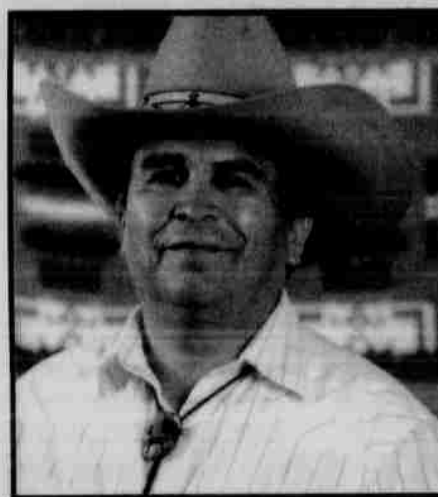
Van Orman said one of the objectives of the TAC would be to look at safety issues along Highway 99, Highway 22, Highway 18 and Highway 47 as well as other county thoroughfares.

"Can public transportation help?" said Van Orman rhetorically. "We have documented that 9,000 county residents leave the county everyday to go to work. We have 18,000 county residents traveling within the county everyday and when school is in session, we have 16,000 public school students on the roads every morning."

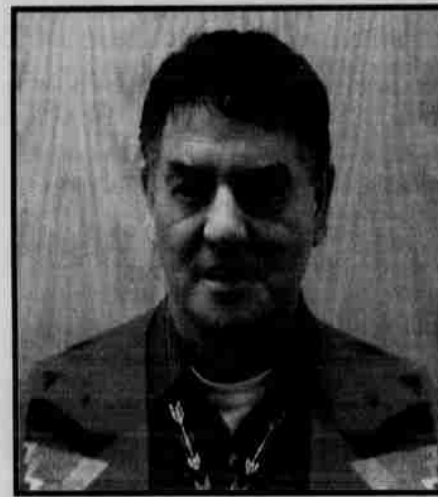
According to Van Orman, one of the other issues the TAC will examine is what he called "the transportation disadvantaged."

According to MWVCOG statistics, 24,500 county residents do not have adequate access to public transportation. Van Orman said disabled people, senior citizens and young people needing to get to and from after school activities will be the target of improved transportation services.

Van Orman said the study would also look at ways to help provide



Ed Larsen



Butch LaBonte

transportation to people who simply cannot afford a private automobile.

"Approximately 30 percent of the county population fits into one of those categories," said Van Orman. Thirty percent of Yamhill's population is about 25,000 people.

"What we are seeing is there is a market for public transportation," said Van Orman. He said the TAC would look at ways to meet that market.

Van Orman said the involvement of county residents who receive the survey is critical.



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