

# Class will teach massage therapy

■ Needed: 8-10 tribal members living with cancer to sign up for a full-body massage.

By Tracy Dugan

Gayle MacDonald believes everyone has the right to feel comfortable and relaxed. Especially folks living with a serious illness like cancer.

MacDonald and Dr. Jim Molloy, a physician at the Tribe's Health Center, are organizing a training in massage therapy to be held on April 1, 2000 for certain health workers. The class needs 8-10 tribal members currently receiving treatment, or have received treatment for cancer to sign up for a full-body massage on this day. Interested volunteers will be asked to commit one and half hours of their time for the massage.

MacDonald, a licensed massage therapist, educator, and author of the book *Medicine Hands*, said that the benefits of massage to cancer patients can be tremendous.

"Our goal is to help people be more comfortable during their treatment



*"After receiving massage therapy, some patients sleep and eat better, and have more energy."*

~ Gayle MacDonald

or recovery period," she said. "After receiving massage therapy, some patients sleep and eat better, and have more energy."

Most of us know that side effects of radiation and chemotherapy can include vomiting, nausea, and overall physical pain and discomfort. MacDonald said that massage therapy can help alleviate pain and reduce stress.

Dr. Molloy met MacDonald at a training session in Salem, where he approached her about coming to the

Tribe's Health Center to teach a similar class. Dr. Molloy has been interested in providing massage therapy services in Grand Ronde for some time, and is putting together a pilot project for the Health Center with Peggy Welch, owner of the Oregon Coast School of Massage in Lincoln City.

"When people are diagnosed with cancer, they experience a great deal of fear and anxiety," said Molloy. "Massage may help with how they respond to treatment. It helps physi-

cally, but it's also about relaxing and connectedness to human touch."

MacDonald, who currently teaches continuing classes at Oregon School of Massage in Portland, has also massaged cancer patients at Oregon Health Sciences University for the past six years.

Through her classes and subsequent book on the subject of massage therapy, she has helped dispel the myths about massage.

"People are very afraid of cancer," she said. "And often times, what patients need is a gentle, loving touch. Often patients cut themselves off emotionally from their bodies. Massage can help them to feel good again."

**Tribal members who wish to participate in the class, or who have questions, should call Sharon Herron at 879-2004 or 1-800-775-0095.**

# Housing grant helps mobility of disabled

By Brent Merrill

Members of the Tribe with disabilities, or members of their household with physical challenges, can benefit from the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority's Minor Medical Adaptation grants.

The grant program has been in effect for one year now and is aimed at helping tribal members with home accessibility issues get new wheelchair access ramps installed. Grant recipients can also get grab bars, toilet supports, shower to tub conversions, hand-held shower heads, adaptive sinks, toilets, faucet hardware, enlargement of doorways, air filtering systems and other accessibility accommodations as individually determined appropriate.

"In the past, we have seen a need for this type of service over and over again," said Housing Improvement Specialist Lonnie Leno.

Leno explained that past housing improvement programs were limited to one-time visits and work. This



These photos show examples of the types of remodeling projects available to tribal members all over the country, through GRTHA's Minor Medical Adaptation grant.

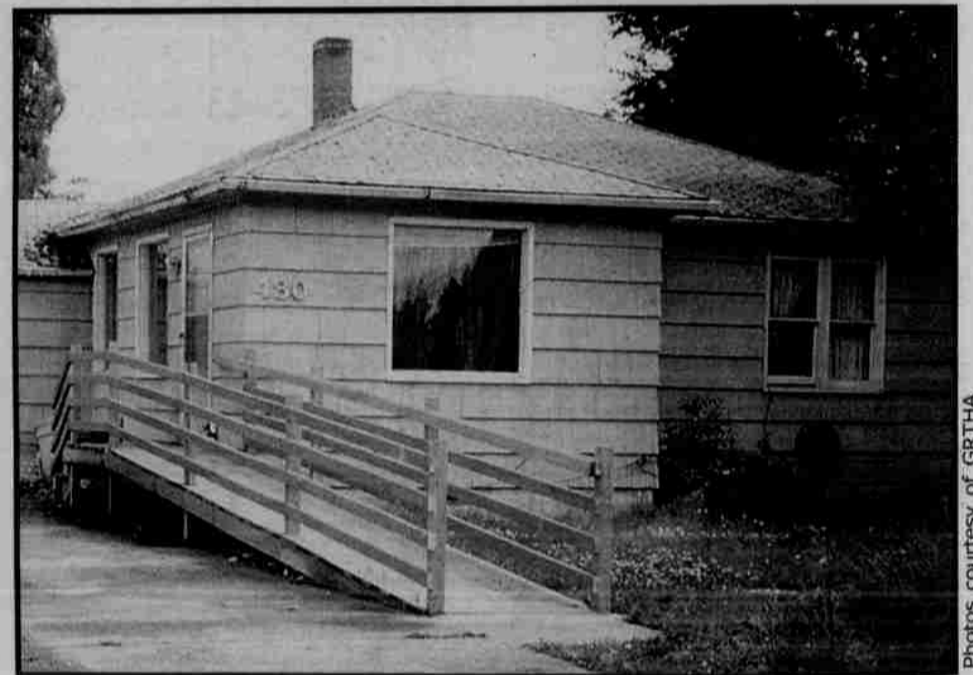
medical adaptation service allows periodic visits if needed.

"This way, with the medical adaptation, as long as it's for a medical reason we can come back the following year if they progress further into their disability and need more help," said Leno.

One important and unique aspect of the medical adaptation grants is that they are available to tribal members all over the country. Some tribal housing programs are limited to local areas.

"This program we actually opened up to anywhere in the continental United States, which is a little different from most of our programs," said Housing Executive Director Linda Layden. "We are trying to help people that have accessibility problems and that's important enough to us to want to try and open it up to all tribal members regardless of where they live."

The other important aspect of the medical adaptation program that is important for tribal members to know is that they don't have to be homeowners to qualify for assistance. Leno said permission from the property owner is enough to get member's



Photos courtesy of GRTHA

rental homes adapted to fit their medical needs.

Leno said tribal members who have already benefited from the grants have appreciated the help — and in each case, the help was needed.

"Everyone has been really thankful," said Leno. "It is something that we can do fairly quickly. We don't have a long waiting list for it and we don't have to go through a long bidding process. We have streamlined the process enough that we can get the request and go out and take a look. Next, we bring some contractors out and we get bids. Then, we take the best one and get to it. So, the turnaround can be as quick as two weeks depending on how extensive the work is."

Tribal member Charles Burkett, who lives in Portland, had his family's bathroom completely remodeled. The remodel was necessary to help with Burkett's handicapped son.

"We had our whole bathroom torn completely out and redone for a wheelchair," said Burkett. "We got a wheelchair accessible door, a new shower, a bench and some rails."

The Burkett family's bathtub was converted to a shower as well.

"It's a big help for us," said Burkett. "We had to lift my son in and out of a wheelchair and lay him down in a bathtub. When you bend down that far it's a big strain on your back. This is definitely a big help."

Burkett said he was pleased that his family got to participate in the whole process.

"We took part in the planning of it and made sure that's what we wanted," said Burkett. He also said he recommends the program to other tribal members with similar needs.

According to Layden, there are no income limitations for consideration of the grant.

"We just feel it is really important to help tribal members who have this type of problem they have to deal with," said Layden.

Layden said the grants can't exceed \$3,000 in one calendar year and because they are grants and not loans, they do not have to be repaid.

Layden also said Elders would be given preference if that issue arises.

If you are interested in accessing this grant funding, please contact the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority at 879-2401 or 1-800-422-0232.

## FREE HOMEBUYER EDUCATION SEMINAR

Wed., March 22  
6 to 9 pm

Tribal Community Center

Learn about credit reports  
and financing a home.

For more information  
and pre-registration  
contact Nancy Holmes at  
(503) 879-2401 or  
1-800-422-0232.



Sponsored by the  
Grand Ronde Tribal  
Housing Authority