

2001 TRIBAL COUNCIL CANDIDATE FORUM

Issues & Answers — Stumping for Your Vote

■ Tribal Council candidate's forum brings people together.

Editor's Note: This is part two of a two-part article on the Tribal Council candidate's forum. Our hope is that Tribal members will be able to use this information to help them decide which of this year's 15 council candidates best fits their wants, needs and desires in an elected official. Two candidates were not present at the forum and did not notify Election Board officials. Three other candidates were also not present at the forum, but they provided reasons to the board. (Bob Haller, Fred McGee and Wesley "Buddy" West. West has subsequently dropped his name for consideration in this election due to the same personal reasons.)

Our video camera battery ran down with two questions left in the forum. Those questions are not represented here.

We did not edit these statements for grammar — these are the true statements taken from the videotape copy we shot at the forum.

BY JUSTIN PHILLIPS

The Tribal Council candidates for the year 2001 shared their opinions with Tribal members at the candidate's forum held in Grand Ronde on Saturday, July 7 at the Tribal Community Center.

Some questions for candidates were submitted prior to the forum and a small group of Tribal members showed up to ask questions in person.

■ *Question from Ellen Fischer, Tribal Election Board Chair:*

"What specific plans do you have to strengthen Grand Ronde culture?"

JACKIE PROVOST:

"Specific plans — I sweat every week. I run a sweat lodge, a women's lodge. It's usually every Thursday, unless there is something going on that prohibits it. I would like to see a women's group, maybe like "Warmothers" or something like that with the young girls, mothers, grandmothers so we can all come together and put this stuff, work on our regalia, our songs, dances. We already do that as a small group, I would like to see my circle grow bigger with Tribal members."

TIM HOLMES:

"I think one of the specific things I think can be done would be the building and the creation of the longhouse. This has been mentioned before. I fully support that. I believe it's a very important part of an Indian community to have a longhouse. That would be one of specific points I would identify. That is something I would strongly support."

PATSY PULLIN:

"I attended Siletz's groundbreaking and their first longhouse and it was so, it moved me so much and I find it was so exciting and it would be so wonderful if we can have our own. And I know we can bring our culture back and do the things that Jackie had mentioned and it would be very exciting. It's a big, a big place that we need to... a void right now that we need to fill and create and I think a longhouse would be a really good start on that."

ED LARSEN:

"I would like us to get Spirit Mountain back. I think we are getting closer to that. We had a meeting with John Hampton awhile back and he said 'find me something to trade.' So, we are going to bring John back down here and talk to him again, but that would be my big goal."

LOREN HOLMES:

"Well, first thing I would like to ask you people is, where was the first Grand Ronde longhouse? Was there a longhouse here in Grand Ronde? That's right. There wasn't a longhouse. So, we are building a longhouse because the Indians over here got a longhouse. It's nice to be an Indian, but then I don't think Grand Ronde Indians believed in longhouse. My parents didn't. And I mean they never went to a longhouse, they went to Warm Springs or one of them places — Siletz, Yakima — but I never did hear of a longhouse here in Grand Ronde. So I don't think that's part of our tradition. So, yeah if that's what you want, I suppose it would be nice."

RICHARD MCKNIGHT:

"Right now I'm working with the Fish & Wildlife Committee and we're looking at reestablishing our fishing rights on Willamette Falls. We went eeling a couple weeks ago to start documenting that we are interested into this and we are working with PGE (Portland General Electric), so maybe we will get that cultural right back."

MARK MERCIER:

"Well, I think that I would like to see is that the Tribe do some kind of master plan that would cover all aspects of cultural preservation. I know a while back at one time the Tribe did make a plan and I don't know what the status of it is that would cover the building of a longhouse and a museum and a few other things that would associate with the culture. I also believe that there has been some people who have donated some items to the Tribe with the belief that they would be sometime displayed in a museum. And so I don't know what the status of that is either and that's about the best answer I can give to that question right now."

CANDY ROBERTSON:

"I think basically everybody has already given my thoughts too, but I would like to add that I think in the ways we can strengthen the culture is to make sure that we get that information out to our Tribal membership, making them aware of things that are brought to the Council regarding archeological items, the longhouse, things like that. I

think the best way we can strengthen that culture is to strengthen to our membership."

VAL GROUT:

"I was just thinking back, Rudy Clements use to come and do our Pow-wow, help us with our Pow-wows and stuff. But, he once told me, as you know a lot of our culture is lost, but Rudy told me he said 'whatever you guys do from the time you were restored, until the end of time,' he said 'that's your culture. Whatever you do, that's your culture.' He said 'you can't take from Warm Springs, or you can't take from Umatilla or any of the other Tribes, you have to be Grand Ronde. Anything you do from here on is your culture.' So, it kind of makes me sad that we have a room over here full of baskets and stuff that different Tribal members have donated and nobody sees them. You know if we can't build a museum, then why can't we have a space out here with like we used to have with the glass case, so that the people that donated these things, before they are gone, they can see and other people can see them and enjoy looking at them and say 'well that was my aunt or grandma or whatever that made them.' So, if we can't have a museum yet, let's try some way to take those things out of this room over here that we never get to see and put them on display so we can enjoy them."

■ *Question from Ellen Fischer:*

"What was your idea on the museum for our Tribe?" I think Val answered that quite well, so I'll pass it on down."

CANDY ROBERTSON:

"I guess on my ideas for a museum would be to, we have, I believe, a cultural committee in form right now, but it would be to gather ideas from the Tribal membership on what they would like to see in a museum. My feelings are thinking about a museum is artifacts, basketry, things that we received that are found so, and I would like to see things like that on display but also history of the artifacts that we have — history of the Tribe as a whole. So, I think a lot goes into a museum, but right now, those are ideas that come into mind for me."

MARK MERCIER:

"Yeah, well that's where I think my master plan for cultural preservation would be a real good idea to start. Although I don't know if that's the best way or not, but it's the only thing I can think of. I think a museum would be good, but we would have to determine exactly what artifacts there are available for display and build it to where if future expansion is necessary, that it can be done with the least amount of pain involved while the expansion takes place."

JACKIE PROVOST:

"I agree with Mark with his statement. The museum is something that really needs to happen, it doesn't have to be on big scale right now. I think we have a lot of things to look at. We mentioned with our endowments and maybe set up an endowment fund for this, so it can go into that, a museum for our Tribe, because it is something that would be ongoing forever. Setting up an endowment for it and for the children, for just the Tribe's future. I think we need to move with the times; maybe the longhouse is the wrong word. Maybe we are looking for more of a community center with a museum, I mean it's something we would have to research and look into, both are in need and I do believe they were both in our needs assessments that have been mailed out, brought back in and over and over and over and I think that it was one of the top five or, yeah, I think that it was one of the top five. It always comes back as something we need big enough, even this room here is not big enough for the general meetings. People come in and they are just squashed and half the time I come in and stand out in the hall because I don't want to get in here and get smashed. It's something we need and maybe longhouse isn't the right word for what we are looking for our gathering and dances. And we need to have more ceremonies and that's mini pow-wows so kids learn to dance, learn the dances and they are not embarrassed and they are out there at pow-wow time and trying to do something. And because it is a big contest pow-wow; someone from Washington or somewhere will say, "Oh, you shouldn't be doing that," you know, but if you don't know, you see something you want to do, but we need to be the teachers for our youth."

MARGARET PROVOST:

"My thoughts on the museum are just like everyone else here. I believe that maybe we don't need to do that big scale, but we do need to do something. The longhouse? I don't ever remember hearing my mother talk about having one here in Grand Ronde. Myself, I don't believe there ever was one here, maybe before her, but she didn't know of it and her grand, her dad didn't know of it and didn't speak of it. But in our surveys we always here of people want a longhouse, whether it's called a longhouse or building big enough to meet our needs, that's what we need. And it needs to be big enough