

Elders Agree: "We're Safe, We're Happy"

■ Late summer marks first anniversary of the Elder's housing development.

By Peta Tinda

For the past 30 years Dorothy Lawe didn't feel at home. She lived in apartments, which she says were loud, and the stairs were hard for her to climb. Now she lives in the Grand Ronde Tribal Elder's Housing Development, which recently celebrated its one-year anniversary.

"After my husband passed in 1960, I had a hard time finding a place that really felt like home. Now this place feels like home. I just love my new house," said Lawe.

The complex, which now houses 31 Tribal Elders, is a state of the art living facility specialized for the needs of the Elders.

"We're pretty happy with it," said Linda Layden, Executive Director of the Tribal Housing Authority. Layden has been involved with the Elder's housing development from the start.

"We have two units that are fully wheelchair accessible and all the rest are built so they are very easily adaptable for wheelchairs," said Layden. "All the doors in the complex are wide enough for wheelchairs and all of the halls have enough turning radius. Also, there are no steps anywhere in the complex, which makes it safer."

The complex is made up of 38 two-bedroom units, all with carports. Each apartment is approximately 900 square feet, with vaulted living



Photo by Peta Tinda

Not Alone — Tribal Elder Dorothy Lawe is just one of the many Elders who celebrated the first anniversary of the Elder's housing development in their new surroundings. Lawe, standing in her garden, said she and the other Elders feel secure and like being close enough to each other that they can visit often with friends and family.

room ceilings and covered porches. Fully equipped with refrigerator, washer, dryer, gas range, gas heating, air conditioning and a dishwasher, the units are all handicapped accessible with bathtub grab bars. Any accommodations for physical disabilities are made when needed. The Senior Services program provides group transportation.

"We also did a perimeter walking path, with shallow grades so it wouldn't be too steep. The tenants are really enjoying using that path," Layden said.

"We still have vacancies and we would encourage people to contact us if they're interested. I feel very satisfied with the whole project."

That feeling of satisfaction seems to describe how most of the Elders feel about the complex.

"I absolutely love it here," said Lawe. "It's nice and peaceful; quiet. One of the girls from the Tribal Wellness Center comes down and makes house calls. They (housing staff) take care of our yards if we want, or don't if we want plants or a garden. I like hav-

ing a little space for flowers; just love that. The location is wonderful because it's right by the clinic and the administration building. And, if we need to see a doctor, wellness will transport us."

But it's the little things that make the difference, Lawe and other Elders said. Things like the electricity outlets positioned high up on the wall, to make them easier to reach.

"A lot of us can't reach normal plug-ins; we get dizzy bending over for them," said Lawe. "Also the doors have handles, not knobs. That makes it easier to get in and out. Our mail is delivered, too. That's nice."

Many of the Elders appreciate the safety that comes with complex life.

That includes Tribal Elder Grace Englehardt, who has lived in the complex for about a year.

"It's easier for me — I used to live alone — but now I can't see and it's not good to be alone... I feel safer here, not so far away from everything," said Englehardt said. "It's quiet and peaceful, that's the main thing. Nobody hollerin' or botherin' and they keep things nice. I really like how we're treated here."

Even though it's only been open for a year, the Tribal Elder's housing development has given many Elders a sense of security.

"It's definitely made my life easier," Lawe said. "I feel better about the future, more secure."

Tribe Sends Sabre-Tools to Help

Continued from front page —

- American Airlines flight 11 (Boeing 767) destined for Los Angeles from Boston crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan shortly before 8:45 am EST.

- United Airlines flight 175 (Boeing 767) destined for Los Angeles from Boston crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center at 9:03 am EST.

- American Airlines flight 77 (Boeing 757) destined for Los Angeles from Washington, D.C. crashes into the Pentagon just outside of Washington, D.C. in northern Virginia at 9:43 am EST.

- United Airlines flight 93 (Boeing 757) destined for San Francisco from Newark, N.J. crashes in Shanksville, PA., near Pittsburgh.

- Shortly after 10:00 am the south tower of the word trade center collapses about an hour after being hit by the second aircraft.

- The north tower collapses at 10:30 am EST.

The Tribe's own Sabre-Tool will be helping out in the effort to save lives in New York and Washington, D.C. The Tribe's Spirit Mountain Development Corporation (SMDC), the business arm of the Tribe, has begun gathering Sabre-Tool units to send to the east coast to aid in rescue efforts there.

The Sabre-Tool is a "Jaws of Life" — type device used to cut through cars in accidents. The Sabre-Tool is a hand-held device that can cut and also sepa-



Photo by Justin Phillips

Things Have Changed Now — This picture of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in New York City was taken earlier this summer. Now, the towers no longer exist and many lives were lost in the aftermath of the attacks.



Photo by Brent Merrill



Photo courtesy of Veronica Gaston

▲ Sabre-Tool in Action — The Tribe, through its Spirit Mountain Development Corporation, manufactures a device known as the Sabre-Tool that is a smaller, hand-held "Jaws of Life"-type device that can either be used to lift collapsed debris or cut through twisted or compressed metal. Units are being sent to the east coast to help in rescues.

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Michael Rasmussen, of PhilMar International Incorporated said he wasn't expecting this type of request.

"We got a call from Champion Rescue Tool Company and they are rounding up rescue tools on the west coast," said Rasmussen. "They are going to take as many tools as we can put together. Our packaging company showed up today with boxes and packing material. We are finishing as many tools as we can put together for either a truck or an air transport to head to Washington D.C. or New York."

"We are prepared to get them there anyway we can," said Gene Hill, Chief Executive Officer of SMDC.

He said they have 15 tools going out in the next couple of days.

"We should have about 65 to 75 tools we will be able to ship over there," said Rasmussen.

Tribal member Veronica Gaston got to see things up close and personal.

Gaston lives near the Pentagon — the site of one of the terrorist attacks. Gaston lives in Bethesda, Maryland, only about 10 minutes away from the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

"Everything is almost closed around here," said Gaston. "They talked about putting a curfew in effect at dusk."

Gaston said everybody in the town is "frantic."

All schools around the immediate

area were shut down.

"Everyone is scrambling to get home," said Gaston. "I went to the grocery store and it was packed. It was very chaotic. There were no shopping carts left. People were buying water, pasta and fresh meat."

Gaston said Secret Service Agents were walking around all the monuments in Washington, D.C.

"It looked like a war zone," said Gaston. "Secret Service was walking around with machine guns."

Gaston said she was stunned and shocked about the whole day, "I wish I was living back in Oregon."

"Today we've had a national tragedy," said President Bush in the national media.