

## Larry Kovach: New Finance Officer is Ready to Roll

■ Parents were immigrants that carved out a living in Canada.

By Peta Tinda

Larry Kovach has been the Tribe's Finance Officer since March. He was born and raised in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. Kovach attended Niagara University. After graduating Magna Cum Laude with a degree in accounting, he went to work for Price Waterhouse, one of the "Big Five" accounting firms in the United States. He spent most of his time in New York City, after which he traveled around working for various law firms around the country.

In 1998, he went to work for a venture capitalist group for three years. One assignment was with a professional hockey team, the El Paso Buzzards, before coming to work in Grand Ronde.

"I love it here," Kovach said. "It's very much like Niagara Falls, where I grew up."

Kovach's background with large law firms makes him well suited to his current position.

"Law firms operate on a consensus basis; very similar to the Tribal Council," said Kovach.

Consensus means that everyone involved must agree before a decision is made, which is traditionally how Tribal governments have been organized.

"I spent a lot of time getting people on board with what needs to be done," said Kovach. "You just can't issue an order. Everyone has to agree."

As Finance Officer, Kovach is responsible for the financial management of all Tribal entities.

"There are very few if any large corporations

that have the breadth of operations the Tribe has," said Kovach.

He reports directly to the Tribal Council.

"My main responsibility is stewardship of



Photo by Peta Tinda

**Cruiser** — New Finance Officer Larry Kovach is a certified public accountant in five states — Ohio, Texas, New York, New Mexico and Oregon and now brings his expertise to work for the Tribe in Grand Ronde. Kovach likes to cruise his Harley when not at work.

Tribal assets," said Kovach. "The Tribe has grown so much, so quickly, that the systems and procedures are playing catch-up on all fronts.

"The Tribe has transitioned from being small in economic terms, to being as large as some corporate conglomerates. The Tribe has a lot of interests," said Kovach.

Kovach has a lot of interests too. His main passion is motorcycles — specifically, Harley Davidson's. He owns a heavily customized 1995 Road King, which he takes out for a ride occasionally.

Kovach said he enjoys the sense of freedom that comes with riding a motorcycle.

"It's a release," said Kovach. "When I'm on that bike, I've got no problems, no concerns, it's like you're on an island. You feel everything around you. But the slightest thing can take you down. I think of that every time I put my leg over that bike."

Unlike a lot of finance managers, "I don't play golf," said Kovach. "Because I can take a half hour and go for a ride, but not play a game of golf.

"There's no in between with motorcycles," said Kovach. "You either love them or you don't."

According to Kovach, the same can be said of his profession.

"It's not a job, it's a life. It's not a job where you punch a clock, 8 to 5. It's with you at all times," said Kovach. "It's the type of job you live, not work."

## Tribal Youth Gain Real Job Experience

■ Summer Interns: "How I spent my summer."

By Justin Phillips

This summer, the Tribe's Public Information Office had two summer interns who were part of the Tribe's Summer Youth Employment program. The youth employment program is part of the Education department. This year 27 Tribal youth participated.

The Youth Education coordinators are Lisa Leno, Dustin Harmon and Richard Sohapp. They worked with Education Manager Marion Mercier, Human Resources Specialist Cindy Watkins and Natural Resources staff to make this program possible.

The eight-week program that employs Tribal youth, ages 14-17, is in its fourth year.

Caitlin Zimbrick and Lisa Reibach shared their knowledge and dedication with *Smoke Signals*.

Zimbrick is a sophomore at Willamina High School.

"I enjoyed working at *Smoke Signals*," said Zimbrick. "This is my second year working as a summer intern. Last year I worked at the preschool."

When Zimbrick isn't working or going to school, she enjoys sports and spending time with her friends and family. Zimbrick's parents are Dennis and Carrie Zimbrick. She has two brothers, Matt and Andy, and two sisters, Meghan and Hannah.

Reibach is also a sophomore this year, attending Tillamook High School.

"I know that the knowledge I've gained from working here will help me later on in school and other jobs," said Reibach.

Family and friends are also a very important part of life for Reibach. Reibach enjoys music.

Reibach's parents are Anne and Ron Reibach and she has an older sister, Jamie, who is 17, and a younger sister, Krissy, who is eight.

"I used to play flute, but have since switched to the bassoon while also playing bass drum in the Pep Band," said Reibach. "Aside from those, I play guitar at home and have a very eclectic taste in music, my favorites being punk, classic jazz and swing."

Kim Mueller, the *Smoke Signals* Production Coordinator, gave direction to the youngsters on day-to-day activities.

"It's great we can bring young Tribal members into our office setting," said Mueller. "It gives them the feeling of what it's like working in the different phases of a newspaper scene, from designing to writing to photography."

The program provides work experience and a chance for kids to earn money and be involved with the Tribe.

The Summer Youth program is again proving it's a good learning experience for young Tribal members. For it is them who will lead the Tribe if the future so we all must share our wisdom and knowledge.



Photo by Justin Phillips



Photo by Teresa Henry

▲ Caitlin Zimbrick

◀ Lisa Reibach

**Learning Curve** — Summer interns Caitlin Zimbrick (top right) and Lisa Reibach (above) spent their summer working for *Smoke Signals* and getting real on the job experience. Zimbrick attends Willamina High School and Reibach goes to Tillamook High School.

### 2001 Summer Youth Intern Job Assignments

- **Preschool:** Alex Bishop, Janel Lara, Jennifer Clark, Gary Guzman, Daniel Garrison and Brett Leno
- **Before & After Care:** Matt Zimbrick, Raymond Duran, Wendy Mercier, Ali Holsclaw, Aliea Finney and Matthew Robertson
- **Business Office:** Veronica Verduzco
- **Medical Records:** Alicia Finney
- **Information Systems:** Danny Clark and Tim Ham
- **Public Information:** Caitlin Zimbrick and Lisa Reibach
- **Records:** Jeremy Trammel
- **Youth Center:** Brittany Thomas, Christina Lara and Adrian Contreras
- **Natural Resources:** Delia Sanchez
- **Groundskeeping:** Kevin Linton, Jordan Tinoco and Doug Gore
- **Dental:** Kyle Kearl