

## Annual "Shop with a Sheriff" Program is a Christmas Story About Giving

By Peta Tinda

The Dallas Wal-Mart was filled with police officers on December 15, but there was no crime scene.

Instead, it was a shopping spree. About 30 kids from Grand Ronde were paired up with sheriff's deputies, S.A.L.T. members (Seniors

And Law enforcement Together) and sheriff's office volunteers for the sixth annual "shop with a sheriff" program.

"We're trying to form relationships with the kids so they can feel comfortable talking to us," said Deputy Bruce Distler of the Yamhill County Sheriff's department. "Plus I like to see kids smile."

After being paired up with an officer the kids went shopping. But they weren't shopping for themselves.

"Our program is different from others," said Deputy Tom O'Brien. "Because the kids aren't buying gifts for themselves, but for their families. And they're very selfless. They just love to give and their families are important to them. It's about giving."

The focus of the shop with a sheriff program is to familiarize the kids with the officers and make sure a child's first experience with a police officer is a posi-

tive one. Many of the officers came in on their days off, or after finishing an eight-hour shift. But they all agreed that they wouldn't rather be doing anything else.

"It's a day we all look forward to," said Polk County Deputy Steve Briles.

That sentiment was echoed in all of the officers present.

"It's nice to see the look on the kids faces," said Polk County Deputy Tara Duncan. "The kids are really grateful and it's nice to see them exited. It's a good feeling to be able to help, especially a little kid."

Not only did the officers donate their time, but many of the officers paid the difference out of their own pockets if the total of their kids purchase went over the allotted thirty dollars. When noticed doing so and asked about it, Deputy Briles said, "Did I pay the difference? Absolutely. It's Christmas time. We went a little over, but it's Christmas."



Photo by Peta Tinda

**"I Think She Will Like These"** — Jane Getsler of Grand Ronde gets help from Deputy Sheriff Steve Briles while she picks out a pair of fuzzy slippers for her mom during the "Shop with a Sheriff" program at the Dallas Wal-Mart.

## THE SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO FEATURE ISSUE



### CASINO'S TOP DOG IS MIKE MOORE —

#### THE MAN WITH THE PLAN

■ President and CEO brings Vegas, East Coast experience to Grand Ronde.

By Brent Merrill

The Tribe's Spirit Mountain Casino is on top. How did we get there? How did we stay there for the last few years? How do we continue to stay on top? As Tribal members, we want to know the answers to these questions.

Past Tribal Council members and people like Mark Mercier, Jim Willis and Bruce Thomas got us started and took us to the top. The top-notch casino staff and people like Bob Watson kept us there. Now, its President and CEO Michael Moore who is charged with keeping us at the forefront of the business. It is his job to make the staff a family and ride the wave of change that permeates itself throughout the gaming industry.

Moore came to Grand Ronde after a stint with the wildly successful Foxwoods Casino in New England and more than 30 years experience in Las Vegas and Atlantic City. We wanted to know what the man with the plan had in his plans — so we asked him.



"Spirit Mountain Casino is an environment of good people focused on providing a high level of consistent friendly service to our guests... that's our strength. To be able to work in this environment is a major benefit and I'm proud to be a member of the team," said Mike Moore. "I enjoy the positive work environment that results when managers and staff work together to accomplish our goal of operating Spirit Mountain Casino in a business manner that generates profits to help provide the Tribe with the means to gain economic self-sufficiency."

### INTERVIEW WITH MIKE MOORE:

**You have a specific message that you want to send to employees — what is it that you really want to get across to folks — especially the employees right now?**

"I guess a couple of things — one is they are doing a great job and they have done a great job. I was attracted to this place because of the quality of the operation. A lot of things are being done very well here. My message is I don't want to reverse what we have been do-

ing. We reviewed our strategic plan and then we had occasion to review our mission statement which is driven by our guiding values — those eight things are, we think, are the cornerstones of our business and if we do those things then we will be successful no matter what the general economic conditions are. We just need to do things a little bit smarter, maybe a little bit quicker, maybe a little more efficiently. We're just taking a sharper look at everything — we can't

rest on our laurels. We can't be satisfied. So that's where we are at."

**What is your background?**

I think it is important for folks to know that I have done a lot of these jobs. When I became a casino employee thirty or forty years ago — I broke in at the bottom. I have done it all — worked all the shifts, done all the things. One thing that I'm proud about and that I have learned is I don't take my knowledge from one part of the country and go to another part of the country and try to plug it in.

This is what I call a local casino — I mean that the people who play here, live here."

**So in a sense what you are saying is that what we do has a broad base, it has a broad appeal to it, but we localize it for folks that come here because we want them to know we recognize the fact they are local.**

"This is an Oregon Casino. It's not a Vegas casino. The mood is different, the pace is different."

**There is a different attitude. There**

#### MISSION STATEMENT

Spirit Mountain Casino will be the premier gaming and entertainment destination in the Pacific Northwest, providing a variety of fun and exciting gaming experiences for its guests.

#### GUIDING VALUES

- ▲ Continuously look for opportunities to provide hospitality to our guests.
- ▲ Customer service is technical, hospitality is emotional.
- ▲ Make Spirit Mountain fun for our guests.
- ▲ Create a fulfilling environment for our employees.
- ▲ Work together and respect each other.
- ▲ Provide opportunities for career and personal growth.
- ▲ Demonstrate that Spirit Mountain stands for quality in everything we do.
- ▲ Continue as a respected and valued member of the community.
- ▲ Recognize that profitability is essential to continued success.

#### VISION

- ▲ Earning guest loyalty and repeat business by providing a fun and entertaining experience, each and every visit.

**is a different sense of who our guests are.**

"Well, their guests (in Las Vegas) are international. One thing they are probably not — they are not from Las Vegas. Foxwoods was a New England casino, not a Vegas casino, not an Atlantic City casino. This (Spirit Mountain) should always be an Oregon casino. And it is — it has that little bit of laid-back, that little bit of quiet — it's got action, but it's an Oregon Country casino."

**Do you go out and meet people on the floor?**

"Yes. Exactly."

**Why? Is that your style?**

"Yes. Just to be in touch. I like to ride in the shuttle buses and go and pick people up. I listen to them. I like to hear what they have to say. I have always done that."

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Photo by Peta Tinda

**It's a Steinway** — Legendary pianist Elgin Bruner, who makes his living as a floor manager at Spirit Mountain Casino, poses for a photo with part of the Legends Restaurant crew after an entire day of entertaining passersby with his vast store of classical music. Bruner, has been in and around gaming for years and has played the piano all his life.