

Community Meetings Focus On Enrollment And Communication

■ Two hundred attend three meetings around Oregon.

By Ron Karten

More than 60 Tribal members, staffs and guests, including at least six Tribal Council members, attended each of this year's community meetings.

In all, three meetings were held in May, one each at public facilities in Grand Ronde, Tualatin and Eugene.

Following this year's events, Planning & Grants Development

members also emailed responses when their personal attendance was not possible.

On an evaluation questionnaire about the meetings themselves, the sessions earned high praise for the food, beverages and meeting room space though some noted that time seemed too short for meaningful discussion and evaluation of the ideas put forward.

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The design of each meeting had Tribal members divided into four groups where they raised the issues of continuing importance. After creating the full list of issues, members voted for the issues most important to them.

In addition, time was set aside for the groups to discuss specific topics of importance to each group including the Tribe's new self-insurance plan, new satellite offices being leased in Portland and Eugene, and in Grand Ronde, community area planning.

Pendleton blankets and other gifts were raffled at the end of each of the meetings. Winners of the blankets were Tribal members Sandy Stone, Stephenie Boteilho and Alicea Leon. To provide fur-

ther input, or to learn what's become of last year's priorities, contact Kim Ray Rogers, Planning & Grants Development Manager, 503-879-2250; or kim.rogers@grandronde.org.



Our Leader—Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryl Kennedy was at the Tualatin meeting to welcome Tribal members and answer any questions they had.

Photo by Peta Tinda



Community—Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker-Robertson visits with Tribal members Rod and Betty Bly during a break at the Eugene meeting.

Photo by Ron Karten

Manager Kim Ray Rogers said that enrollment issues remained of top importance to members followed by increased health coverage for non-member spouses and children. Long term health care for Elders and questions about how to improve communications with the Tribal Council for members living outside of the Grand Ronde area also were important to those in attendance.

Other priorities, according to Rogers, include legal services for members, more Tribal member employment and a recreation center in Grand Ronde.

Attendance has grown during all the years that the Tribe has sponsored this event, going up from 154 in 2002 and from 178 in 2003, said Rogers. One hundred ninety six attended this year's events. Tribal

"I find it next to impossible to have the time to go around to each group's idea charts and read them all, never mind giving them any value of thought," wrote one attendee. "Just not enough time at the end of meeting to do that."

The meetings included a number of timely presentations, including one by the Tribe's new health insurer, United Medical Resources Inc. (UMR) and health care advisor John A. Ellis, Director of Native American Practice for KPMG LLP. Terri White, Executive Assistant for the Tribal Housing Authority, described recent and coming projects by the Housing Authority, and Tribal Engineer Eric Scott described recent and coming projects from the Tribe's Engineering and Community Development Depart-



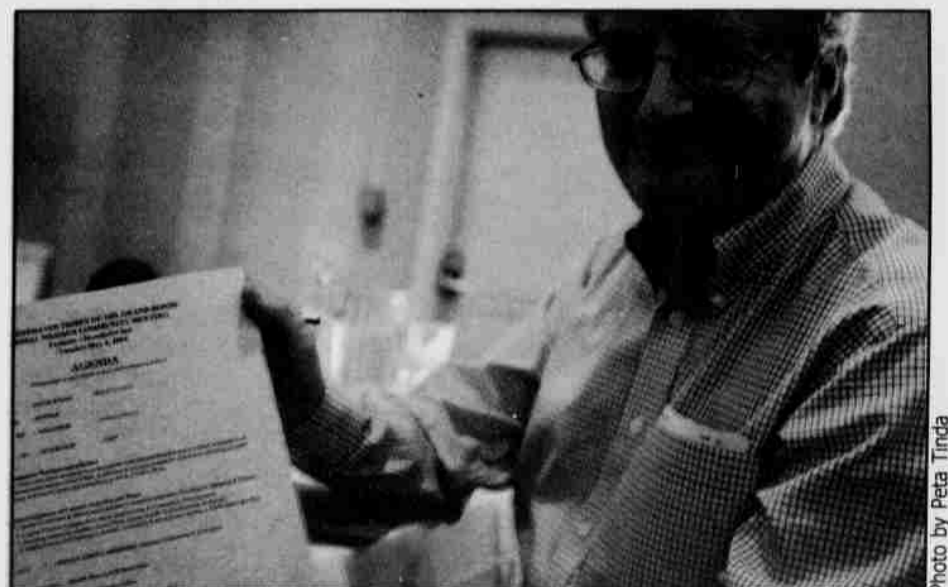
We Listen—In Eugene, Tribal member Tammy Stillman listens as her husband Jeff makes a point in the small group discussions that were part of the meetings.

Photo by Ron Karten



Photo by Peta Tinda

Interested—Lavina McKinney, an 81 year old Tribal Elder who lives in Portland, was at the Tualatin meeting to be brought up to speed on the Tribes progress during the past year.



The Man With The Plan—Planning & Grants Development Manager Kim Rogers holds up an agenda for the community meeting. Rogers and other Tribal employees put on a presentation illustrating the Tribes projects and plans.

Photo by Peta Tinda