

# Candidates' Forum 2004

■ Thirteen candidates seek better communication and more support for Tribal members.

By Ron Karten

Candidates for Tribal Council this year include three incumbents — Tribal Elders Val Grout, Bob Haller and Ed Larsen — and ten others including Tribal member Mark Mercier, who previously served as a member of the Tribal Council.

Tribal Elders Betty Bly, Diana George, Linda Olson, Wesley (Buddy) West, and Tribal members Angie Blackwell, Charlene Hoover, Elaine LaBonte, Chris Mercier and Daniel Provost also are running for three open council positions.

All were on hand for the 2004 Candidate Forum, held at the Tribal gymnasium on Sunday, July 18. Each had three minutes to describe their background and explain why they were running for Tribal Council.

"Communication" was top among all issues raised. Concerns surfaced from candidates in a number of areas. Some, for example, suggested that *Smoke Signals* would provide a better service if it were free to report on all issues. One suggested using the Tribe's satellite television capabilities to broadcast important Tribal Council events to the Tribe's widespread membership. Another said that Tribal Council meeting minutes are "not accurate or incomplete."

Related to this, candidates pointed to another kind of disconnect between the Tribal Council and the members.

"Tribal services serve a very small portion of the membership," said another.

While acknowledging many perceived problems, candidates also complimented both the process and many of the council's efforts. "We may have differences," said one candidate,

"but that's where the good ideas come from."

"There's so many things I'm grateful for," said another candidate, and



Photo by Justin Phillips

**Planning** — General Manager Cliff Adams and Staff Attorney Lisa Estensen discuss how the 2004 Candidates' Forum went and ways to improve it.

pointed to health insurance and Elder benefits.

Very few commented about enrollment, an issue that has been simmering in recent years, but one speaker indicated that whatever the decision, the Tribal Council was not going to please everybody, so maybe it was time to make a decision and get on with the Tribe's other business.

One candidate said that the Tribe "should be a little more aggressive in pursuing other economics," and also asked that the Tribe "do a thorough master plan."

Following candidate statements, emcee Cliff Adams, Tribal General Manager, opened the floor for the audience to make suggestions for next year's event.

Although candidates would provide

time at the end of the event for individuals to ask questions one on one, Tribal member Deanna Johnston suggested that questions be posed to candidates in front of the audience so that all could hear the answers.

"I would like to hear more than concern (on the part of candidates)," said Tribal member Monty Parazoo, "but what they intend to do about it."

"We need to take a whole day to discuss these issues," said Tribal member Perri McDaniel.

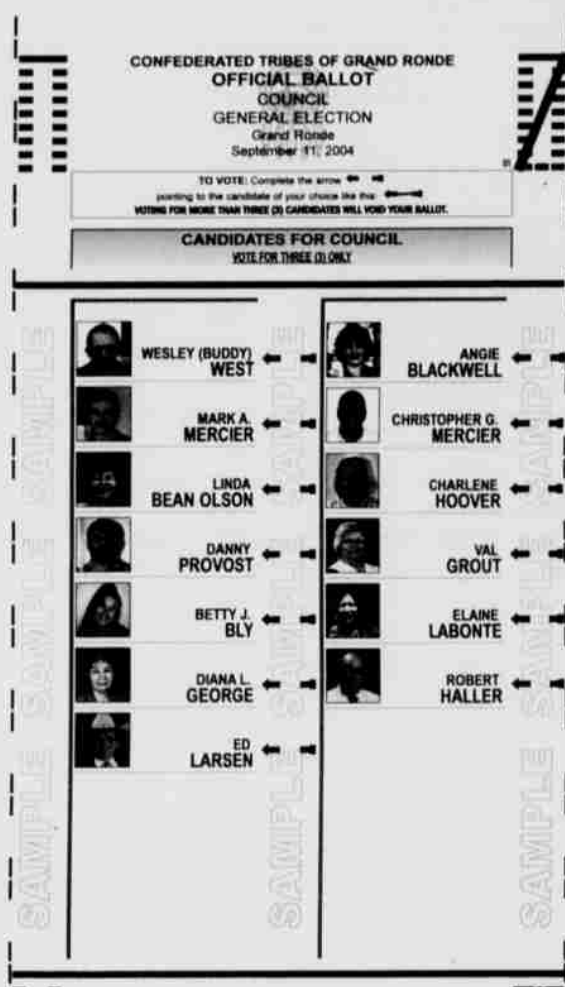
"They don't have enough time to really explain what they're about," agreed Tribal Elder and former council member Margaret Provost after the meeting.

"We should have more forums," she added. "One in each service unit."

"We need to do something for the kids," said Tribal Elder Marce Norwest. He recounted how he sees them on the road with their skateboards, apparently without a place to put their prodigious stores of energy.

One candidate said, "It kind of hurts my feeling that this room isn't overflowing."

Tribal Council Vice Chair Reyn Leno said afterwards that he was pleased to see that the 50-70 attending appeared to represent an increase over last year,



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and also that a lot of new faces were running for the council.

## BALLOTS DUE

September 11, 2004



Photos by Marly George



**Friends & Family** — At left, Tribal members Tyrone Rock and his son, Nakai, share a moment at the Volcanoes baseball game in Keizer at the end of July. At right, Tribal member Melanie Monson (on left) and Alyssa Magness also took a turn at rooting for the home team. The Tribe is a major supporter of the Volcanoes. Coming August 8: Kids' baseball clinic, sponsored by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Volcanoes vs Vancouver B.C., 5:05 p.m., all kids in attendance will be invited from the pros a one-hour baseball clinic on the field with the Volcanoes, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. The clinic is free to any child with admission to the Volcanoes game that evening.