

# New Medic Alert System Could "Save Lives"

By Toby McClary

Beginning in January of 2005 the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will be offering a medic alert service for homes in Tribal-sponsored housing projects.

The offer is open to families that have either an Elder or a disabled family member in the household. Out of the possible 110 Tribal homes, about 66 are eligible for the medic alert service.

An information packet has been sent to each home in Tribal housing. At press time, of those homes, three families had returned an application to the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority requesting the service and 12 had showed interest and wanted more information.

"I think it's great," said Housing Director Carina Kistler Ginter. "We really need to take care of the Elders."

There were four options of alert systems available: Monitronics, Sonitrol, Global and A.D.T. The Tribe has selected to use Global Security and Communications, Inc. as medical alert system provider because it has the longest range and it is the least costly. It has a range of 500 feet and is easy to use. There is a choice of either a remote

pendant or a pendant that can be worn on the wrist or around the neck. The base unit will hook up to an existing phone line and a stan-

tion option for communication through a two-way speakerphone. Both should result in immediate responses.

bal was the most attractive," said Tribal Council member Chris Mercier.

Tribal Elder and former council member Val Grout said that she plans to have the system put in her house. She also issued a personal challenge to council at a recent general council meeting to see how much progress could be made on this within 30 days.

"It's been worked on for so long, it's nice to finally see some action being taken," said Grout. "I'm at home alone quite a bit. This will give me a peace of mind in case something happens."

Tribal Elder Tony George, 61, also plans to have the system put in his home.

"I'm not in good health," said George. "I think this will be good."

The Tribe plans to set up a pilot program, or test run, to see how many families are interested and to see how well it works. Plans to expand this service to more Tribal families in need are

being talked about. The cost of the service will be paid for by the Tribe.

"It's a great idea," said Mercier. "We value our Elders and this will save lives."



Photo by Toby McClary

**Good Idea** — Tribal Elder Tony George poses out front of his home in Tribal Elder housing. George is one of the many Elders that have opted to have the medic alert service installed at their residence.

dard wall outlet.

Should an emergency arise, one just pushes the button on the pendant and it automatically dials help. There is also a two-way conversa-

Global Security and Communications, Inc. will provide free installation and a customized calling list for each family.

"We looked at four options but Glo-

## Coyote Joe's Gears Up For Another Great Free Christmas Dinner

■ Owner Rolly Heuser opens his doors to all.

By Ron Karten

Imagine for a moment that you are homeless, living in your car with your children and it's Christmas morning. No tree. No gifts. Few prospects.

Last year, this very family, on its way to the coast, knowing nothing about a free Christmas dinner, drove by Coyote Joe's restaurant in Willamina, saw all the cars in the parking lot and stopped in.

Coyote Joe's owner, Rolly Heuser, takes it from there: "The kids were a little cranky because they were tired and hadn't had any gifts. After we fed them, the volunteers went to the tree and got them presents and their faces just lit up. All of a sudden, they were excited about seeing Santa and everything else and that's what Christmas is about."

For the seventh year on this December 25, Heuser and his crew of 16-20 volunteers, opens up Coyote Joe's from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with free food, live music, the real Santa Claus with presents for all sizes, shapes and tastes and seating for all who come. Last year, the team served 435.

And not all of them are poor.

Last year, a Dallas couple left a note on the table saying if we had not prepared their dinner, they would not have had one at home.

They come from Dallas, Salem, Newberg, McMinnville. It's a big mix but it's not just the needy. Those who are by themselves at Christmas also come in to enjoy the good atmo-

sphere."

Because of Workers Comp rules, Heuser has to pay a number of employees for the special dinner and he keeps a jar by the cash register for contributions to pay those people, though he said that money is not required or requested.

The Coyote Joe's crew is busy getting ready for the month before Christmas. Heuser still hadn't contacted Santa by early December, though Bev Williams, a Sheridan dance teacher, had again committed to play live music for the guests.

The Van Duzer Winery outside of Dallas usually ponies up a few cases of wine. A friend from Salem who works for a cosmetic company, usually brings in all kinds of "cosmetics, bath soaps and stuff" to be wrapped as gifts.

Toys — stuffed and otherwise — find their way under the tree, as

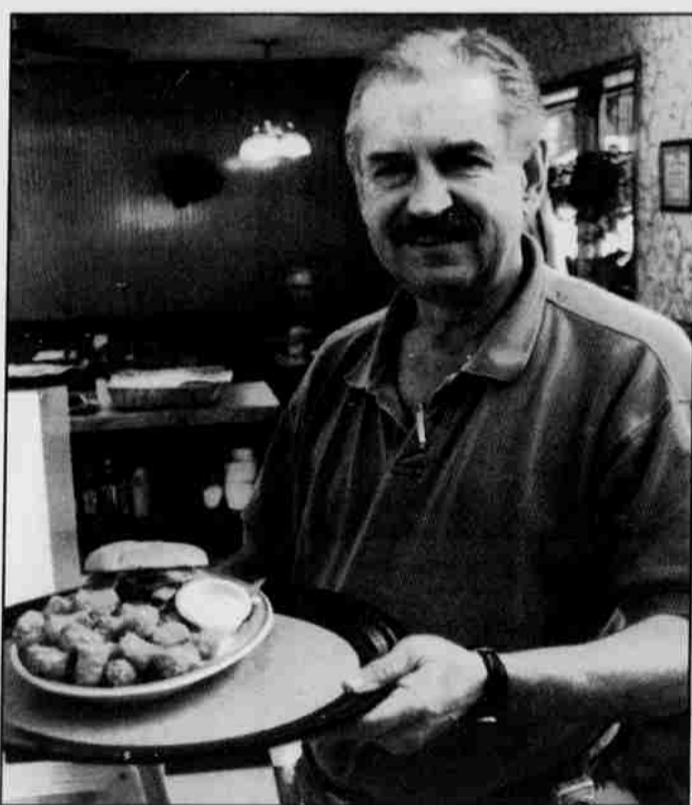


Photo by Ron Karten

**It's All About Giving** — Coyote Joe's owner Rolly Heuser is ready to serve up free Christmas dinners for the seventh year in a row.

do varied presents of all sorts for all sizes. "They're donated or we buy them," said Heuser.

So what's for dinner? It's either a ham or turkey dinner with vegetable, mashed potatoes and gravy. There will be a dinner salad and also a dessert.

"Last year," said Heuser, "we went through 80-100 pounds of tur-

key and 60 pounds of ham."

Volunteers do everything from making salads and setting up dessert dishes to taking orders for food and serving it. Volunteers wrap presents and give them out. And then, they bus the tables. "It's a lot of fun," said Heuser.

One year, volunteer Joyce Zimbrick waited on a table of an elderly woman. Zimbrick asked her if she had family in the area. She had a son and his wife and two grandkids, but she didn't have any money to buy gifts for the grandkids so she hadn't joined them. "Joyce went to the tree and picked her out some gifts and wrapped them," Heuser remembered. "And after she ate, Joyce gave her the gifts and said, 'Here. Go and join your family.'"

On Christmas Day, Coyote Joe's also does deliveries to shut-ins. "We'll fix it to go," said Heuser.

Also on Christmas Day, said Heuser, "I usually open at around eight or nine in the morning and have coffee and maple bars available without charge for anybody who drops in."

"It's one of the busiest days for the amount of time we are open," he added.

So what does this bonanza cost Heuser: "I'm afraid to look at it," he laughed. "I figure probably in the neighborhood of \$1,500."

"I appreciate everybody throughout the year," he said, "and this is just our way of saying thank you."