

## Elders Foster Care Homes Ready

**FOSTER CARE continued from front page**

I used to have knee aches, even way back then. I ended up in bed with her. She'd rub my knees." And later on, Grout added, "She took care of our mother for years, and never a word of complaint."

Tribal Elder Dakota Whitecloud looked at the facilities before the dedication and came away thinking that something was missing. "An eagle feather was missing," she said. She provided an eagle feather for each resident and combined them with prayer ties made by Tribal Council member Westley West.

"The people I need to thank the most are the Elders," she said.

Tribal Housing Authority Director Carina Kistler Ginter described "the amazing hurdles" that had to be overcome to bring this project to life. She named the water treatment plant and sewer treatment plant that were built as two examples.

And she related a personal story of the six months she spent trying to find the right facility for her own father. "It was horrible," she said,

pointing to facilities that "cost a lot and served a little."



Tribal Elder Foster Home & Housing Director Carina Kistler Ginter (inset)

"I had so many options and Tribal members have so few," she said.

At least until now here in Grand Ronde. "We've had a team that cared

more than anything about providing a home."

Awards for members of this "team" were many, and the facilities that have resulted should

ribbons were cut simultaneously. Cheryle Kennedy, Leon "Chips" Tom and Tribal member Pete Wakeland wielded the scissors.

This project, according to the dedication program, consists of three buildings of 5,200 square feet each. The buildings are named Black Bear Lodge, Cougar Lodge and Elk Lodge, and will be operated by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde as facilities for Elder foster housing. Each building has five private sleeping rooms for the residents with private bath, and common areas for cooking, eating, socializing and lounging.

The Elder Foster Housing has been built as a joint project of the Confederated Tribes and the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority, with Tribal funds and grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Buildings were designed by LRS Architects, Inc. of Portland, and built by Quade Commercial Construction Corp of Lincoln City.

"I think these facilities are outstanding," said Tribal Elder and Council member Wink Soderberg. "This is truly a facility that our Elders can move into with dignity and comfort." ■

Photos by Justin Phillips

## Working Class Heroes Are Something To See

**ACCIDENT continued from front page**

was his wife, Linda Randolph, 48, a Sheridan High School graduate, who was hurt critically in the accident. She also wore a helmet, and though she is reportedly free of brain damage and recovering, her injuries are extensive and she remains in intensive care.

The Hartley's 1999 GMC pickup and the Harley Davidson motorcycle burst into flames on contact. The vehicles had been thrown clear of the road when witnesses pulled the Hartleys from the burning GMC.

Hartley was not hurt and her mother, taken to Willamette Valley Medical Center in McMinnville, was injured only slightly.

Spirit Mountain Casino Lead Security Officer Charles Vinson, on outside patrol at the casino, heard the call about "a major accident" and "a vehicle in flames" come in from a bus driver, and radioed Security Dispatch to get permission to go "off property to give assistance in any way I could."

He received clearance and was first among police and medical services to reach the scene.

"I expedited to the scene of the accident," said Vinson. "I saw debris scattered. I blocked traffic with my vehicle in the center of the westbound lane. Motorists were already starting to block all incoming traffic." He encouraged them to continue holding the traffic back.

"I went over to see if I could render assistance," said Vinson. "I realized that two were dead and one seriously injured. I rendered as much help as I could

until the paramedics arrived.

"There were regular citizens everywhere and they were doing a wonderful job. When the paramedics arrived, I just did what they told me."

He immobilized the head and neck of Linda Randolph and helped put her on a back board.

"Shonn (Leno) said they were right there," said Shonn's uncle, Tribal Council member Reyn Leno. "I really appreciate what they did."

Meanwhile, he was also in touch with Security Assistant Shift Supervisor Mitch Cheselka, and Security Officer Roel Hernandez who called for the Life Flight, as requested by the paramedics.

Life Flight arrived "five to six minutes after I made the call," said Hernandez, and "maybe 15 minutes" after the paramedics requested the Life Flight, said Vinson.

Among plans that were delayed by the accident was Tribal Council nominations scheduled for 11 a.m. that morning.

"An amazing thing about it," said Casino General Manager and Tribal member Randy Dugger, "all the employees who were here, recognized that people were trapped, that fellow employees weren't going to get to work to replace them, and still they helped in any way they could to make sure that the people here were taken care of."

"I heard the crash," said a neighbor who asked not to be identified. I got the cell phone, called 911, and talked to them on the way out to the highway.

"Then the Spirit Mountain security guard (Vinson) came and pulled in front of traffic and completely stopped it. Traffic had been trying to ease by. (Vinson) must have made an immediate assess-

ment and ran back to his truck and picked out a first aid kit and a blanket, and he assisted with the lady who had been on the bike. He was very good. He did not seem authoritative, did not yell and scream. He just did things and it was obvious he knew what he was doing so people just let him do what he was doing."

Two ambulances arrived, and one took off with one victim and another took off for the Life Flight (arriving at the casino parking lot)."

"Another biker stopped to help, and was doing what he could, but every so often he just stopped and shook his head."

Some people came walking by to try to reach their jobs at the casino or other businesses in the area, and the neighbor/witness passed out water in paper cups.

This witness said that police, trying to protect the accident scene, sent a number of these local workers back through the accident scene.



Photo by Toby McClary

**Heros** — Roel Hernandez, left, along with fellow heroes Charles Vinson and Mitch Cheselka, right, join Tribal member and Casino Security Manager Joann Mercier during an honor presentation for the security officers' fine work in the face of tragedy.

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Commendations for the officers came from Dugger as well as from Casino Security Manager and Tribal member Joann Mercier, said Brian Willis, Security Shift Supervisor. In a tribute to the casino's heroes, all nine Tribal Council members were on hand for the presentations.

The police investigation was continuing as *Smoke Signals* went to press, said Oregon State Police Sergeant Brad Hessel, with the possibility of criminal charges being filed against Sharon Hartley, driver of the instigating vehicle.

"(Casino Security staffers Vinson, Hernandez and Cheselka) took initiative that may have saved someone's life and did so without any regard for their own personal safety," said Dugger.

"I get all teary-eyed when I think about it," he said. "I wanted them to know personally that I couldn't find the words to express my appreciation." ■