



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Tribal Elder Jackie Whisler walks on Key Grand Ronde Restoration figure succumbs to cancer at 56

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

All morning on Dec. 7 — the day the Tribe laid to rest esteemed Elder Jackie Whisler — the sun kept disappearing behind the clouds.

After a celebration of her life in the Tribal gymnasium and burial in the Tribal cemetery, a light rain fell intermittently over Grand Ronde for the rest of the day.

It seemed fitting.

Jackie, born Jacquelyn Rae Mercier on Aug. 10, 1951, in McMinnville, will be remembered, friends and family said, for her tireless work on the Tribe's Restoration effort.

But that's the historical side. For many grieving her death and honoring her life, more personal memories came to the forefront.

"I'll remember her laugh," said Christine Mercier, wife of Jackie's father, Tribal Elder Dean Mercier.

"I remember first and second grade," her son, Doug Colton, said. "She was our den mother. She made cookies and everything. She was a great cook."

He said his favorite home-cooked meal was fried chicken, particularly the wings that Jackie made for their hunting trips.

"To this day, when we go hunt-



Photo by Ron Karten

An enlarged photo of Tribal Elder Jackie Whisler sits to the left of her coffin during a celebration of life ceremony held Dec. 7 in the Tribal gymnasium. Whisler, who died Dec. 3 at the age of 56, was an instrumental volunteer in the Tribe's Restoration effort in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

ing," Doug said. "Mom would make us chicken wings for our trip. She also made chocolate chip cookies."

"She was always there for us and everything. She basically led our Cub Scout stuff when we were in

Amity. She was always there for Little League, too, making sure we had clean uniforms. You couldn't ask for a better Mom when we were growing up."

Jackie was born to Dean and Ger-

aldine (Dorland) Mercier and raised in Grand Ronde. She married Doug Colton Sr. in July 1968, bringing

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Enrollment election dominates General Council meeting

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

A presentation and subsequent discussion about the Feb. 8 Tribal enrollment requirements special election dominated the Dec. 2 General Council meeting.

Tribal Attorney Rob Greene and General Manager Chris Leno presented history and information about the three proposed constitutional amendments. Their presentation was followed by Tribal Council member comments and Tribal members who had questions

about the Tribal Council's decision to split the election into three votes instead of the two recommended by the Enrollment Requirements Ad Hoc Committee in October 2006.

Greene briefed General Council attendees on the Tribe's enrollment requirement history and the changes proposed in the Feb. 8 Bureau of Indian Affairs election.

Before 1999, Tribal membership was open to people who were not members of another federally recognized Tribe and whose name appeared on the official Tribal

membership roll prepared under the Grand Ronde Restoration Act.

Membership rules also required that people possess at least 1/16th Indian blood, be descended from a member of the Grand Ronde Tribe and have been accepted as members under the Tribal Enrollment Ordinance.

After the 1999 vote to amend Tribal enrollment rules, membership became available to people who were not members of another federally recognized Tribe and, if were a member of another Tribe,

had relinquished membership in that Tribe for a year.

Also, membership became available to those whose name was on the official Tribal membership roll that was prepared under the Restoration Act or existed as of Sept. 14, 1999.

To become a new Tribal member, applicants had to have at least 1/16th Grand Ronde blood; be born to a parent who was a member of the

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