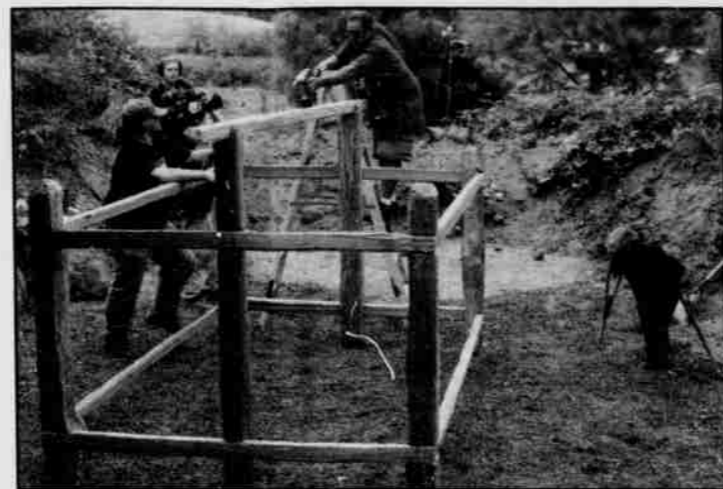


In mid-September, Tribal Elder Don Day and Cultural Resources Director David Lewis built a miniature longhouse on the Roloff farm as part of filming for "Little People, Big World."



Series of photos by Toby McClary

# Filming and fry bread

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Roloff family hosted about 50 members of the Grand Ronde Tribe on Saturday, Nov. 3, on their farm in Helvetia (near Hillsboro) for filming and fry bread.

The Roloffs — Matt and Amy — and their four children, family and friends are the subject of the 3-year-old reality television show, "Little People, Big World," currently airing Monday nights on the TLC cable channel.

The Little People of the title refers to the Roloffs, who are living with dwarfism. Half of the Roloff clan attained regular height and appearance.

When father Matt, 47, long a successful businessman, got it in his head to do the show, said Amy, who is 45, the rest of the family readily agreed.

Amy said she remembers thinking if it lasts three months, that will be a lot. That was more than three years ago.

And she also remembers hoping that if anybody enjoyed watching her family involve itself in everyday life that maybe they also would learn to appreciate people with dwarfism, and for that matter, people with any physical challenge in their lives.

With that in mind, the family and television producers have developed the Roloff farm with many set pieces built into the countryside: Main



Photo by Ron Karten

Matt Roloff, left, and his wife, Amy, second right next to the cameraman, talk to Grand Ronde Tribal Council member Chris Mercier, left, and Tribal member Greg Archuleta for an upcoming episode of "Little People, Big World," which airs Monday nights on the TLC cable channel. The Grand Ronde episode might be broadcast in March.

Street in a Wild West town and a medieval castle, to name a few.

For the Grand Ronde Tribe, the involvement with the show started last spring when producers in Los Angeles contacted Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor to see what would be an appropriate "set"

for Northwest Indians.

"I thought a plankhouse would be perfect, and out of that we developed the idea of sharing our history and our culture with the Roloff family," Taylor said.

In mid-September, Tribal Elder Don Day and Cultural Resources Director David Lewis built a scaled down longhouse for the Roloffs.

On the day of the November visit, a procession of Tribal members and Roloff friends and family visited the longhouse. Tribal member Bobby Mercier offered a blessing in Chinook Wawa and English.

And then the group returned to the farm's central location where Tribal royalty and warriors, drummers, dancers and canoe family members, Elders and staffers met the Roloffs, performed for them and participated in the making of a show.

The aim was to teach a little about dwarfism

in general and the Roloff family in particular to Tribal members, and a little about Native culture to the Roloffs, to make new friends, all in addition to show business.

"I was impressed at all they knew about us," said Tribal Council member Chris Mercier.

"To me," said Amy Roloff, "the most impressive thing is to see how the (Indian) kids continue to get involved. Knowing their history and traditions can still have significance. It's very beautiful."

A couple of camera crews, each including a cameraman and soundman, roamed the farm's picnic area where hosts and guests mixed. They followed conversations and taped traditional songs and dances.

Tribal member and canoe family leader Bobby Mercier described the dance accompanying one song as being "like weaving a basket."

The canoe family's high school girls sang a song they created on a recent beach excursion.

Meanwhile, two teams of three — wearing team colors, incidentally — kicked a soccer ball around. The field spread out almost all the way to the Wild West set.

Tribal Council member Kathleen Tom made gifts of bead necklaces to many among the Roloffs and their family and friends, and then the Grand Ronde Tribal members treated the Roloffs to an Indian feast of salmon, squash, fry bread and huckleberry jam, traditionally prepared for the group by Tribal members Greg Archuleta and Jon George.

If all this attention and all these games seem a little beyond the normal childhood, Amy said she has tried to forestall potential problems from the start with her children.

"It was a difficult first year," she

said. "My main job was to make sure their lives didn't change."

"They continue to go to the small school that they started at. They keep their focus."

Matt Roloff discussed regalia with Grand Ronde Warrior Peter Nelson, and then looked down at his own jeans and said, "I feel like I'm dressed kind of blasé."

The TLC production staff will pull all the video and audio together for a show anticipated for broadcast in March.

To keep tabs on when the show will air, visit [tlc.discovery.com/fansites/lpbw/lpbw.html](http://tlc.discovery.com/fansites/lpbw/lpbw.html). ■

Right, Matt and Amy Roloff pose for pictures with Grand Ronde Royalty, including, from left, Little Miss Grand Ronde Promise Rimer; Veterans Young Warrior Peter Nelson; Junior Miss Grand Ronde Lindsay McCue; Senior Miss Grand Ronde Tenatia Jackson (who has since finished her term as Senior Miss); Honorary Miss Grand Ronde Alexis Lane (in front of Tenatia); and Grand Ronde Princess Goldie Bly.



Right, the Roloffs enjoyed a salmon dinner prepared on site in the traditional way by Grand Ronde Tribal members.

Below right, canoe family drummers, from left, Mary Johnson, and Tribal members Kayla Grijalva, Zoey Holsclaw, Kim Roybal and Amanda Grijalva perform during the episode's filming.



Below, Tribal member Alexis Lane, Honorary Miss Grand Ronde, participates in a Native dance along with Amy Roloff, behind right.

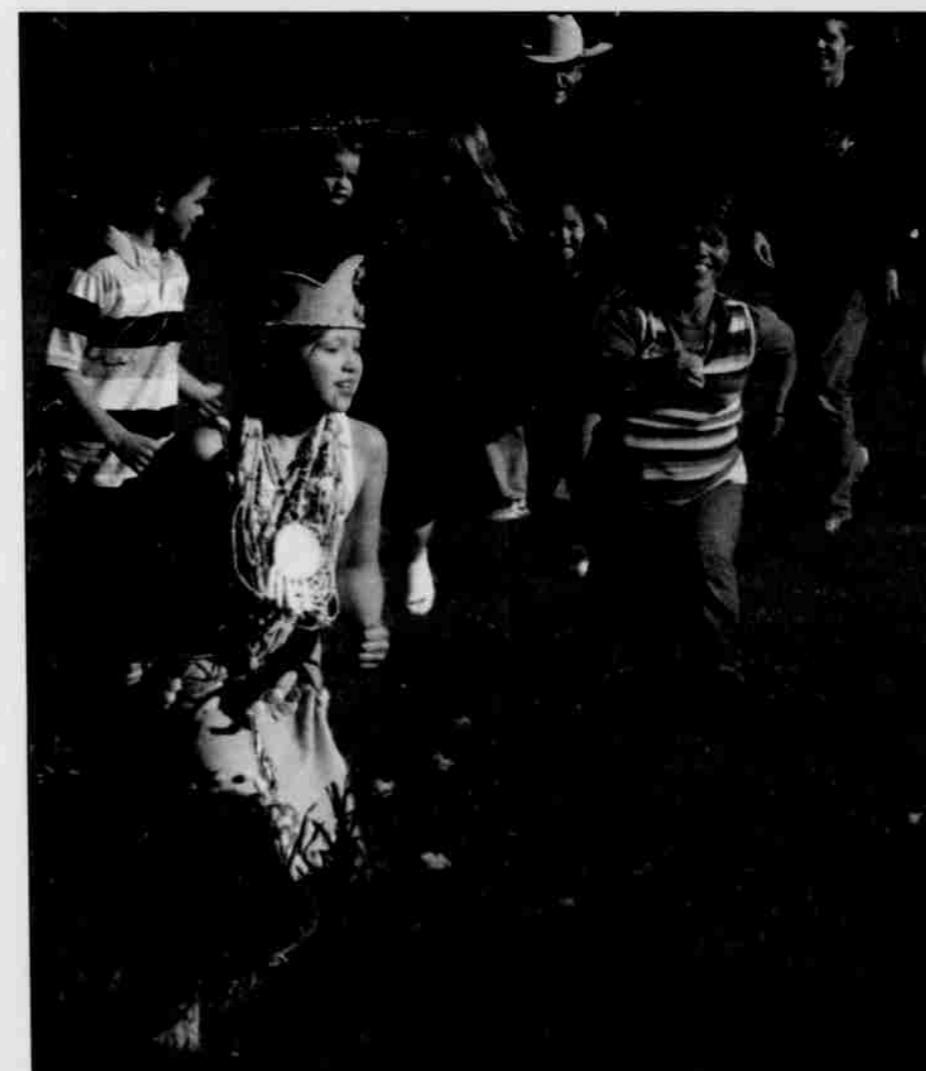


Photo by Ron Karten

Matt Roloff, seated center, examines Tribal member Peter Nelson's regalia during the taping of a "Little People, Big World" episode on Nov. 3.



Photos by Ron Karten