

Tribal Council nominations set

Tribal Council nominations will be accepted at 11 a.m. Sunday, June 29, at the Tribal Community Center. For more information or any questions, call the Elections Office at 503-879-2271 or 800-422-0232, ext. 2271.

Contest Powwow vendor information

If you are interested in being a vendor for the Grand Ronde Annual Contest Powwow, Aug. 15-17, 2008, contact Shannon Simi or Dana Ainam at 1-800-242-8196 to request an application.

Letters

Dear Smoke Signals:

I wanted to thank everyone who attended my baby shower that was held at the Tribal Community Center on April 13. I appreciate all of your support and I love all of the wonderful gifts that everyone gave to me and my baby. I will be using them very soon!

Ashley Langley
Roll #2995

Dear Smoke Signals:

A heartfelt thank you to all the wonderful people who joined in and helped in searching for my grandson, Christopher, on the afternoon of May 3. The future Houdini was found safe and exploring in the woods. In the words of a great lady, "It takes a village to raise a child."

Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts.
Deanna Ellingson & Jina Ellingson
Roll #1507

Dear Smoke Signals:

After seven years of failed policies and decades of divisive politics in Washington, many Americans have abandoned hope that our concerns will be taken seriously. It only makes sense that in these difficult times we turn to a candidate who has done more than any national political figure in recent memory to espouse hope in this country. Sen. Barack Obama has inspired thousands of Americans to join his movement for change.

As Native Americans, we are endorsing Barack Obama in the Oregon presidential primary because he understands the core issues that matter to Indian Country here in the state. He understands poverty. He understands the concept of minority communities. He has seen and lived in areas of abject poverty, of poor health conditions. He has experienced the merging of different cultures. He has lived in places where the indigenous people, whose very lands were taken, are disenfranchised and have little voice in the big decisions that affect them. Sen. Obama has seen minority populations relegated to the background.

Above all, Barack Obama represents the kind of real change that Indian Country will need to address the issues facing our community. Despite a cultural and linguistic revival, and even a vice presidential candidate some time ago, little attention seems to have been given to Native issues in the national discourse. Demographically, we continue to be one of the poorest populations, with the highest unemployment rate, and the greatest risk for health-related issues in this country.

Sen. Obama has outlined a number of steps to give the issues facing the Indian community the attention they deserve. He has pledged to appoint an American Indian Policy adviser to his senior White House staff. He has already proposed an annual "Tribal G8" meeting of national Tribal leaders to develop an Indian policy agenda. And Sen. Obama has continuously upheld Tribal sovereignty through support of policies for self-determination and self-governance, and has indicated support for legal protection of sacred places and cultural traditions.

Sen. Obama has proven that he will indeed be a serious champion for Indian Country, focusing on the issues that affect Tribes everywhere, including right here in Oregon. He has indicated that he would reform our broken trust system. He was one of the original co-sponsors of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act of 2007, and has advocated for providing an extra \$1 billion for Indian Health Services. And Sen. Obama has supported the Combat Meth Act of 2005 to help fight a growing plague on our reservations.

Having recently paid off his own student loans, Sen. Obama understands the importance of education and the struggles many of us face in pursuing educational opportunities. As president, he is committed to fully funding No Child Left Behind and meaningfully reforming the act to better incorporate the Title VII-Indian Education provision.

Furthermore, Sen. Obama supports integrating Native languages, culture and customs into Tribal school programs, in addition to increasing funding for American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs, which are critical to helping our children succeed.

We face an important choice in the Democratic Primary here in Oregon. The reality is that many of our nation's problems — and those of our community — aren't going to be solved until we abandon the politics of fear

See letter continued on page 21

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings

DATE TIME
Wednesday, May 21 5 p.m.

Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed. Call Dakota Whitecloud, Tribal Council Relations Coordinator, at 503-879-1309 to confirm.

Tribal Office Closures

All Tribal offices will be closing on Friday, May 23, at noon and will be closed on Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day.

Smoke Signals

PUBLICATIONS OFFICE

9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347

1-800-422-0232, FAX: 503-879-2173

www.grandronde.org

SIOBHAN TAYLOR
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR
503-879-1920
siobhan.taylor@grandronde.org

KRISTEN RAVIA
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
SECRETARY
503-879-1418
kristen.ravia@grandronde.org

DEAN RHODES
PUBLICATIONS
COORDINATOR
503-879-1463
dean.rhodes@grandronde.org

SCARLETT HOLTZ
PUBLICATIONS
SECRETARY
503-879-1453
scarlett.holtz@grandronde.org

JUSTIN PHILLIPS
PAGE DESIGNER
503-879-2190
justin.phillips@grandronde.org

RON KARTEN
STAFF WRITER
503-879-4663
ron.karten@grandronde.org

GEORGE VALDEZ
GRAPHIC DESIGN
SPECIALIST
503-879-1416
george.valdez@grandronde.org

MICHELLE ALAIMO
PHOTOJOURNALIST
503-879-1961
michelle.alaimo@grandronde.org

SHELLY KENT
CENTRAL PHONES
503-879-5211
shelly.kent@grandronde.org

CARLA ROBERTS
CENTRAL PHONES
503-879-1447
carla.roberts@grandronde.org

DEADLINE DATE **ISSUE DATE**

Friday, May 20 JUNE 1

Thursday, June 5 JUNE 15

Friday, June 20 JULY 1

Editorial Policy

SMOKE SIGNALS, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, is published twice a month. No portion of this publication may be reprinted without permission.

Our editorial policy is intended to encourage input from Tribal members and readers about stories printed in the Tribal newspaper. However, all letters received must be signed by the author, an address must be given and a phone number or e-mail address must be included for verification purposes. Full addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless requested.

SMOKE SIGNALS reserves the right to edit letters and to refuse letters that are determined to contain libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals, staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Letters to the editor are the opinions and views of the writer. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of **SMOKE SIGNALS**, Tribal staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council.

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2008 Tribal Council

1-800-422-0232 — council@grandronde.org

■ **Cheryle A. Kennedy**
Tribal Chairwoman
— ext. 2352
cheryle.kennedy@grandronde.org

■ **Chris Mercier**
— ext. 2305
chris.mercier@grandronde.org

■ **Reyn Leno**
Tribal Vice Chair
— ext. 2399
reyn.leno@grandronde.org

■ **Wink Soderberg**
— ext. 1444
wink.soderberg@grandronde.org

■ **Jack Giffen Jr.**
Tribal Secretary
— ext. 2306
jack.giffen@grandronde.org

■ **Kathleen Tom**
— ext. 1777
kathleen.tom@grandronde.org

■ **Steve Bobb Sr.**
— ext. 2353
steve.bobb@grandronde.org

■ **June Sell-Sherer**
— ext. 2300
june.sherer@grandronde.org

■ **Valorie Sheker**
— ext. 2355
val.sheker@grandronde.org