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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Program aids home buyers

Tribal members receive help with down payment

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

Tribal member Kass Ritchey, 24, is now the proud owner of a house in Tacoma, Wash., that has been in his family since his grandparents, Frank Ritchey and Grand Ronde Tribal Elder Emma Riggs, bought it in 1940.

The house was passed down to his aunt, Becky Walrath, who recently married and moved.

"She ended up having to sell the

house," Ritchey said. "The family pretty much dropped it in my lap, but they said, 'If you want it, you're going to have to buy it.'"

Ritchey and his partner, Jamie Bates, had been renting the house.

Ritchey has been a carpenter for seven years and with Bates is the father of a newborn boy, soon to be Tribal member Karson. The house, on 1.5 acres with two dogs running around, is pretty much made for the

Editor's note: This is the first installment in an occasional series detailing the many kinds of assistance provided by the Tribal Housing Authority. For more information, contact the Tribal Housing Authority at 503-879-2401. For more information about the Down Payment Assistance Program, contact Nancy Holmes at 503-879-2445.

family's current situation.

"My mom (Tribal member Ann Ritchey) suggested I call the Tribe," Ritchey said. "I called and they were just great. Nancy Holmes and the whole Housing Authority

people made it easy. I called Nancy. She sent out the application. I filled it out. She sent the check to escrow

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Hatfield Fellows honored

*Event welcomes
Francene Ambrose,
says aloha to
Rebecca Knight*

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

The Hawaiian word "alo-ha," which means hello and goodbye, seemed the appropriate sentiment at the Aug. 14 welcoming of Tribal member Francene Ambrose, who will begin working in Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden's office this fall as the 10th Hatfield Fellowship recipient.

Tribal member Rebecca Knight, the ninth Hatfield Fellow who recently finished her nine-month assignment working for Oregon Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, is off to the University of Hawaii, where she will obtain her master's degree in public health.

Spirit Mountain Community Fund employees and about 30 other Tribal members, staff and Tribal Council members bid Knight, 23, farewell in the Atrium of the Governance Center.

Knight also received a fond farewell from Hooley, who recorded a DVD played during the ceremony.

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Photos by Michelle Alaimo



Above, Tribal member Francene Ambrose, right, talks with Tribal Council member June Sell-Sherer during a reception to welcome her as the 2008-09 Mark O. Hatfield Fellowship recipient in the Atrium of the Governance Center on Thursday, Aug. 14. At left, Tribal member Rebecca Knight, recipient of the 2007-08 Mark O. Hatfield Fellowship, listens as Louis King, Spirit Mountain Community Fund Program Officer and coordinator of the Hatfield Fellowship, says farewell to Knight as her nine-month fellowship comes to an end. Knight worked in Oregon Congresswoman Darlene Hooley's office.