

Letters

Dear Tribal members:

I am writing in response to a letter from the Sept. 1 *Smoke Signals*.

I am currently in the Mentorship Program and work at the Gaming Commission. I have thoroughly enjoyed working for the Tribe in the six months that I have been here. Hopefully, this position will launch me into a career with the Tribe for many years to come. I am very thankful for all of the support and resources that the Tribe and many Tribal members and employees have given me over the years.

The staff here at the Gaming Commission has been very supportive and helpful in helping me strive for my goals and gain valuable experience. However, I share the same concerns as another Tribal member (and I'm positive many more members). She stated she was working for the Tribe for the summer and enjoyed her job, but was concerned about how a lot of the negativity within the Tribe and attacks on her family would keep her from working here in the future. That breaks my heart to hear this from a young Tribal member, but, unfortunately, I too am gravely concerned about this.

I know a lot of emphasis has been put forth from members and Tribal Council about getting our youth educated and going to college and then getting them to return and work for the Tribe. I, for one, would love to work here until I retire but, quite honestly, if there is one thing that would cause me to want to work elsewhere, this is it. I am sick and tired of the gossip, rumors, letters and all other mean-spirited acts that take place.

A number of people have told me that's just the way it is and will always be, and I will have to endure this no matter where I work. To me that is no excuse for such behavior.

I understand that similar instances do happen in other professions, but it is different with the Tribe. Working for the Tribe, it's more personal when bad things are said or rumors are spread as opposed to another business that has nothing to do with my heritage or family. At times it is just flat out painful for me to sit through a council meeting because I know that people will start arguing, pointing fingers, heckling others or just being disrespectful.

I realize that debate will happen and that's fine, but too often there have been more personal attacks rather than healthy debate. I'm not trying to single out any person or any group of people here as it is up to all of us to put an end to such nonsense. Hopefully, we can unite as one Tribal family to put our differences aside and make this Tribe a desirable place to live, gather and work.

If the membership is really that concerned about keeping young Tribal college graduates in Grand Ronde a priority, then the negativity has to end. If that happens then I hope to be here until I retire; if not, then this Tribe may lose a very valuable and heartbroken employee and Tribal member. Thank you all for your time.

Tyrell J. Soderberg
Roll #1797

Food Bank seeks volunteers

The Grand Ronde Community Resource Center is seeing additional part-time volunteer help at the Food Bank in Grand Ronde.

Help is needed in various activities, such as unloading freight, stocking and labeling shelves, food distribution activities and clerical work.

Duties will be assigned based on volunteers' skills and abilities.

If you have the time and would like to volunteer a few hours per week, call the Resource Center on Monday or Fridays at 503-879-5731 for more details or to obtain an application. ■

Attention Tribal members

Effective Oct. 1, copies of Legislative Action Committee recommendations will be available on the Tribal member side of the Tribal Web site. They will be located with the Legislative Action Committee minutes.

These forms are only a recommendation used by the Legislative Action Committee to move discussion items to a regular Tribal Council meeting for a vote of the Tribal Council.

If you have any questions, please contact Dakota Whitecloud, Tribal Council Relations Coordinator, for more information. You may reach her at 503-879-1309 or 1-800-422-0232, ext. 1309. ■

Open for comment

Right to Work Ordinance

The Tribal Council, in consultation with the Tribal Attorney's Office, is considering adoption of a Right to Work Ordinance. The proposed Ordinance was given a First Reading at the Aug. 13, 2008, Tribal Council meeting.

The purpose of this Ordinance is to ensure the right of persons to work and pursue employment on the Reservation without the restraints of mandatory membership in, or payment of dues, fees or other financial support to a labor organization.

For a copy of the proposed Right to Work Ordinance please contact the Tribal Attorney's Office at 503-879-4664. The Tribal Council invites comment on the Ordinance. Please send your comments to the Tribal Attorney's Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347.

Comments must be received by Oct. 1, 2008.

Colleges offering Chinuk Wawa courses

Lane Community College and Chemeketa Community College have joined with the language program of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to offer first- and second-year Chinuk Wawa beginning this fall.

The courses offer a unique language learning opportunity not only in modality — instruction is through the medium of IP video and small groups onsite — but also in terms of language structure and the unique status of Chinuk Wawa as a language that connects Northwest Tribes.

Each site will have a qualified language mentor/speaker of Chinuk Wawa. Tony Johnson, the head of the Grand Ronde Language Program, and Janne Underriner, director of the Northwest Indian Language Institute at the University of Oregon, will be instructors using IP video through the sites at Grand Ronde and Lane Community College.

All credit students must register through Lane Community College at www.lanec.edu. New students should contact www.lanec.edu/es/admissions.html to register.

There are a limited number of noncredit registrations available to those with Tribal affiliations or instructor approval.

For more information about the Chinuk Wawa classes, visit www.grandronde.org or call Lane Community College at 541-463-5419. ■

Paintbrush Carving Class

Portland Office, 3312 S.W. Kelly Ave.

6:30 – 9:30 P.M.

Mondays

(Sept. 15, 22, & 29)

Design and carve a unique paintbrush handle and make a paintbrush with traditional materials.

Must provide your own carving tools

To sign up and for further information contact
Cultural Education, Misty Thorsgard at
1-800-422-0232 (ext. 2320)

Ad created by George Valdez

Attention Parents and primary caregivers of Grand Ronde children with disabilities, special needs, or extra challenges:

We are creating a support group for parents and caregivers of Grand Ronde children with special needs. We will first begin an e-mail and telephone contact list and later we will be coordinating meetings with the group.

If your child, grandchild, foster child, etc. has extra challenges (medically, emotionally, or developmentally) and you would like to collaborate and share resources with other parents, please send your contact information in an e-mail to: lewis.dmc@comcast.net or call us at 503-566-3093.

Thank you,

David (2741) and Donna Lewis

parents to Saghalie (5132) and Inatye (5323)

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