

## Tribal member rescues teddy bears



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Veronica Gaston dresses a teddy bear that she is planning on giving away in the living room of Black Bear Lodge on Wednesday, Feb. 11.

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

Tribal member Veronica Gaston, 39, remembers the names of every teddy bear she has refurbished and given away in thanks to local ambulance teams, police and firefighters.

The first one, early last year, was Ted E. Bear, and given to Metro West Ambulance in Hillsboro. Employees had been taking her to Oregon Health Sciences University two to four times a week for almost two years from her home in McMinnville. She has "numerous medical problems," she says.

"I started making them as a thank you," says Gaston from the living room at Black Bear Lodge where she now lives.

Since then, she has refurbished bears named Joe Patch; Al S. for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's Disease); Buzz; J.D., after the name of Metro West Ambulance's owner, J.D. Fuiten; Larry, Mac and Sparky.

"A Polk County deputy was doing

a report for me," says Gaston, "and saw the bear pictures on my wall, and asked how he could get one.

"I told him that it requires only one thing — the patch. So, now I'm waiting for the Polk County patch because I already have their bear ready.

"I rescue the bears from Goodwill and garage sales. I bring them home and clean them up. I find clothing and booties for them at Goodwill."

For McMinnville firefighters, she found suspenders, boots, coats and hats appropriate for firefighters "turned out" and ready for a fire.

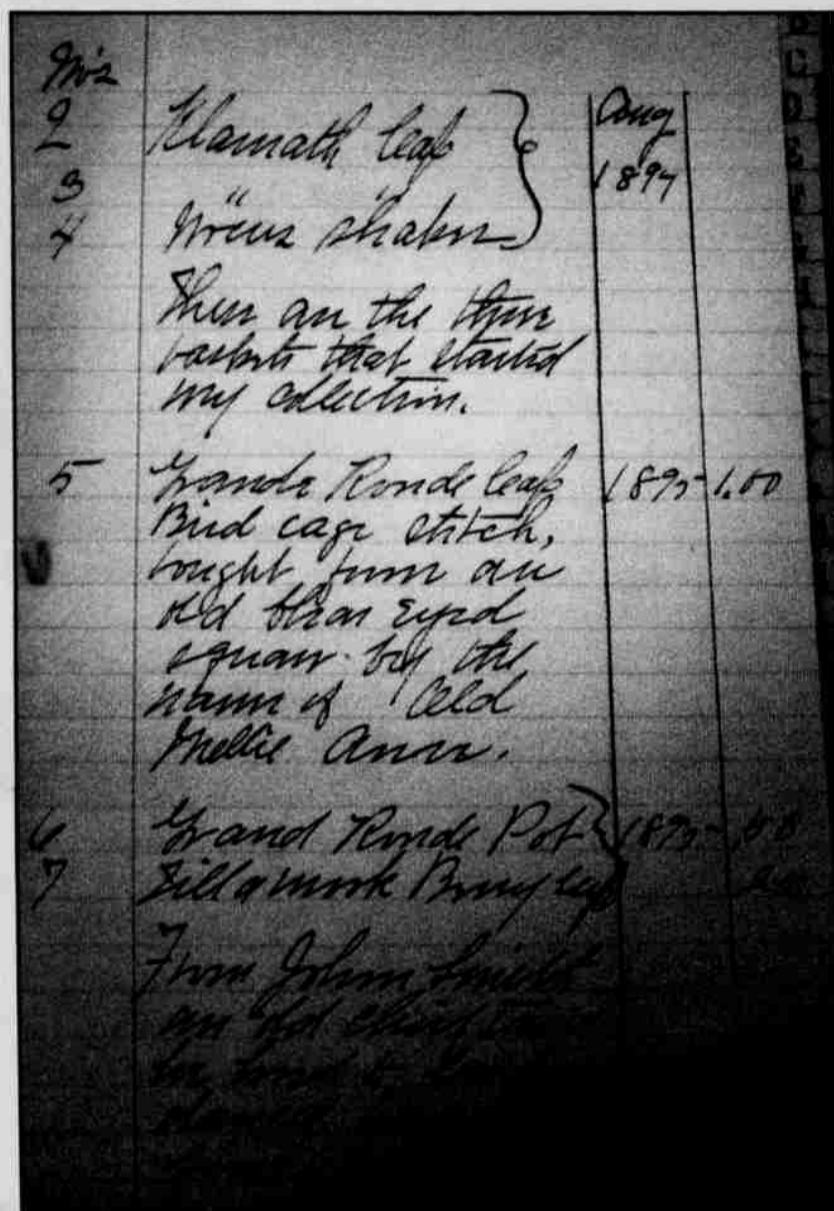
"People don't seem to realize what a great service they provide, and that they put their lives on the line 24-7," Gaston says. "And in a way, for me, it's therapeutic as well.

"Giving them away is the hardest part."

"She is so good-hearted," says Linda Gardner, executive assistant to the chief of the McMinnville Police Department. ■



## Recognize these names?



This is the collector's inventory of objects donated to the University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History. The entries are from 1895 when the donor was visiting Grand Ronde and contain information about the baskets that were bought and the names of the people who sold them. If anyone knows the people listed or has any information about them (basket making history, DOB/D, history), please contact Stephanie Wood at the Museum of Natural and Cultural History, 541-346-2853.

## Transportation to Grand Ronde

The Portland Satellite office has a transportation day to Grand Ronde once a month for medical or dental appointments or enrollment cards. A minimum of three people must sign up. Call Lisa at 503-235-4230.

We will leave the Portland office at 8 a.m.

Please call in advance for the scheduled monthly date. ■

## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Please join us for a new grandparent support group at a different time and place. We will meet the third Thursday of each month. The February topic of discussion will be "Interventions: Parenting young children."

Hope to see you there.

### Support Group

Date: Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009

Time: 10:30 A.M. - Noon


Place: Elder Activity Center

Speaker: Jeffery K. Lukshart, Ph.D. from the Center for Successful Living Northwest Senior & Disability Services

Present to answer questions: Dawn Cottrell from Yamhill County Health & Human Services Family & Youth Programs

Contact Persons: Carmen Mercier 503-879-1646

Ad created by George Valdez



# ODOT Workforce Information Workshop

## Feb. 19

### 10 - Noon

in room 126  
Adult Education

Learn about:

- Highway construction employment opportunities
- Qualifications
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Resources Available

This opportunity is open to all who are interested in working for ODOT. For more information, please contact Denise Harvey, 503-879-1112.

Please contact Denise Harvey, 503-879-1112

Ad created by George Valdez