

Strategic Plan process visits Yakima

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

About 50 people attended the April 19 Community Meeting held in Yakima, Wash., to provide input on the Tribe's Strategic Plan process.

Tribal Planning and Grants Department Manager Kim Rogers said about 23 Tribal members attended from eastern Washington (mostly the Yakima and Kennewick areas), one drove over from Idaho and the remainder were Tribal Council members, staff and Tribal members from western Oregon.

Since January, the Tribe has been soliciting Tribal member input on a new Strategic Plan, which is being updated for the first time since 1995. The Tribe has previously held meetings in Grand Ronde, Clackamas and Eugene to accept Tribal member input. The final meeting is scheduled for May 17 in Bend at the Riverhouse Hotel.

The comments collected from these meetings will be considered in completing the Strategic Plan. There will then be a 60-day comment period on a final draft of the Strategic Plan before it is considered for adoption by Tribal Council.

Rogers said that four Tribal members filled out and left comment forms in Yakima, rating the space, food and agenda positively.

There are 116 Tribal members in Yakima County, which is not far from the Tri-Cities in southeastern Washington state and approximately equidistant from Seattle, Spokane and Pendleton.

At the end of the meeting, Tribal member Sheila Wyatt won a drawing for a Tribal stadium blanket and Tribal Elder Shirley Deane won the drawing for a copy of the Tribe's 25th anniversary Restoration DVD. Wyatt and Deane both live in Harrah, Wash. ■

Conference tour



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker looks through a magazine at one of the information booths at the 2009 Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism at the Salem Conference Center in Salem on Monday April, 20. The conference ran between April 19-21 and Tribal and casino employees Siobhan Taylor, Kristen Ravia, Janele Guterrez and Ashley Langley staffed the Tribe's information booth at the event. Tribal member Jan Michael Looking Wolf Reibach performed during the conference's awards ceremony.

Tribal Government Day set for May 14 at State Capitol

By Dean Rhodes

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The flags of Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes will join the flags of America's 50 states in the Walk of Flags on Thursday, May 14, during Tribal Government Day events at the State Capitol in Salem.

Events start at 9 a.m. Thursday. Per tradition, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Spirit Mountain Casino will serve breakfast to attendees during the morning reception.

Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor and other Tribal staff will be at the Grand Ronde information booth in the Galleria of the State Capitol.

In addition, a flag ceremony and proclamation reading by Gov. Ted Kulongoski will be held to celebrate the Tribal Flags Monument that has been placed on the grounds of the State Capitol with the Walk of Flags. Two Grand Ronde veterans are scheduled to participate in the Tribal Flag event.

A barbecue lunch buffet, hosted by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe and Seven Feathers Casino, will start at noon.

In addition, Grand Ronde Tribal Council members plan to attend the event. ■

A Message to America from Tribal Elders

This Message to America is the result of the National Indian Council on Aging's year 2000 conference in Duluth, Minn. More than 1,700 Elders from 108 Tribes across America attended and contributed to the words in this message. Think about your Elders as you read this. They came together, setting aside Tribal and political differences in order for you and your children to have some words of wisdom to help you in your lives.

Please pass this on to as many people as you can, both Native and non-Native alike. These are the words of our Native Elders, but the values expressed can be appreciated by all of humanity. Once you have read it, you are responsible for it. These are the Elders' hopes and dreams for the world you re-create every day.

—A Spiritual Message to America—

As we stand before the dawn of a new millennium, we pray for America's survival, our survival.

We pray that we will be given strength by the Creator to follow the footsteps of our forefathers to share our love, respect and compassion for one another. There is good in everyone because the Creator has put a little of himself in all of us.

We pray for forgiveness for the pain and suffering we have caused one another.

We pray that our children will not repeat our mistakes.

We pray that we can respect the diversity of America; all life is sacred. Every child born is a precious gift of our Creator. It is our sacred trust to embrace children from all walks of life because we are part of the same family.

We pray that children will honor and respect their Elders — that is where the wisdom comes from. This respect will not allow forgotten Elders. We are all equal, with each having our own special gift to contribute. These values will allow our youth to become leaders and workers in our society. Children, you are our future and our hope for the people. Stand and be courageous.

We pray to learn and use the wisdom of all that has come before us, to achieve personal successes and to contribute to those of others. Only when our young ones learn respect for everything can they evolve.

EARTH

We pray for respect and love of Mother Earth because she is the foundation of human survival and we must keep her pollution-free for those who will travel after us. Protect her water, air, soil, trees, forests, plants and animals. Do not just take and waste resources. Make it a priority to conserve. The land is given to us by the Creator to care for, not to own. If we take care of the land, the land will take care of us.

UNITY

We should have respect for each other. We pray for commitment and responsible behavior in order to help those in need and to give them support and friendship. Be an example in life that others may follow; serve people, community

and country.

We should all strive to be leaders and contributors. Do not sit back and let others plan and do all the thinking. Let us unite together so that we may have the strength to protect our future. Strength comes from working through trials and tribulations.

HEALTH

Spiritual health is the key to holistic health. We pray to have the discipline to set healthy examples for our children to follow. Respecting everyone and everything in the universe starts with self-respect. Take time to listen and take care of your body and spirit.

FAMILY AND YOUTH

Family is important and precious. Always let them know that they are loved. Let your children and grandchildren know you are always there to love and support them and that they mean the world to you no matter what they do or say. Children are of infinite value. Live what you teach. Spiritual values, honesty and integrity start in the home.

We pray for the youth. We must teach the youth to work together and respect all that is living on our Mother Earth. We need to convey to our younger generation that the survival of our people lies in spirituality.

PEACE

We pray to learn ways to settle differences peacefully. Teach respect for each other's ideas. Value honesty on all levels, from children to parents to community to governments. We will be happy when we create peace with each other.

TO THE SEVENTH GENERATION

- Survive
- Keep hopes and dreams
- Take care of yourself
- Remember your spirit
- Be there for each other
- Respect courage
- Share knowledge
- Always keep learning
- Remember your true values

Submitted for reprint by the Grand Ronde Culture Committee