

NRD staff uncover illegal poppy grow

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Appropriate and quick action by Tribal Natural Resources Department employees after discovering an illegal poppy plant growing operation on Tribal lands on Thursday, July 2, helped the Yamhill County Interagency Narcotics Team eradicate the grow.

"They (Tribal staff) were more cooperative than I could ever have expected," said Sgt. Dwayne Willis of the Interagency Narcotics Team. "They were extremely helpful."

The plants, used to make heroin and opium, were growing in a field created by a clear cut and totaled 12,056. They ranged in height from 1 to 4 feet.

"In my 18 years of being in law enforcement, this is the first time I've ever seen poppy plants," Willis said. "They were not just strewn about in the forest. They were definitely in garden plots and definitely planted for illegal purposes."

Willis said the plants were seized with the assistance of the Sheriff's Office and McMinnville Police Department. In addition, the federal Drug Enforcement Agency has been notified of the incident.



Photo courtesy of Natural Resources

Poppy plants were found on Tribal lands July 2. The illegal plants, used to make heroin and opium, were growing in a field created by a clear cut and totaled 12,056. They ranged in height from 1 to 4 feet.

Deputies estimate the street value of the opium or heroin that could have been made from the poppy plants at about \$45,000.

No suspects have been arrested in the case, which remains under investigation.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde owns more than 10,000 acres of forested land in Yamhill County

as part of its restored Reservation, most of which was returned to the Tribe in 1988 by the federal government.

"The Tribe has zero tolerance for any illegal drug activity," Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor said. "We are actively engaged in the statewide drug prevention effort and have an established

meth watch program and drug prevention committee active in our Tribal community.

"We commend our forestry staff for being alert and immediately notifying the authorities of this find. We are cooperating fully with local authorities and hope their investigation leads to the immediate arrest and conviction of those responsible.

"We are concerned our Tribal land would be used for an illegal purpose like this. Our goal is to be very vigilant as we watch for any presence of illegal drug activity in our community. Finding a grow operation like this on our Tribal land is of grave concern to all of us at the Tribe. We are doing everything in our power to protect our members and our community from the scourge of drug trafficking and abuse."

The Grand Ronde find was the second discovery of an illegal poppy plant growing operation in Oregon in recent weeks.

More than 8,000 poppy plants were destroyed by police after they found an illegal crop in Linn County.

"It's hard to say, but it seems to be a new trend," Willis said. ■

Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority



REQUEST FOR BIDS

The Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority (GRTHA) is soliciting bids by 3 p.m. Aug. 5, 2009, from contractors to perform periodic maintenance work for GRTHA-owned housing in Grand Ronde. All contractors are required to meet Davis Bacon Standards.

Bids for services needed in the following areas: landscape maintenance, cleaning, electrical, plumbing and mechanical.

Contact GRTHA to receive related bid packets and additional information. Phone: 503-879-2401 or toll-free at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2401. Fax: 503-879-5973.

SMGI Board of Directors position

Spirit Mountain Gaming, Inc. invites dynamic business orientated individuals to apply to the Spirit Mountain Gaming, Inc. Board of Directors. There is one position open for a qualified candidate who possesses the appropriate business knowledge and experience.

The SMGI board of directors is responsible to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Tribal Council and oversees fiscal accountability, budgets, policies, procedures and business operations of Spirit Mountain Casino.

The SMGI board meets monthly and each board member receives a stipend for their participation in board meetings.

Qualifications should include general business knowledge and experience in a hospitality/customer service driven environment. Knowledge of Native American owned and operated organizations preferred but not mandatory. There also should be a demonstrated ability to be responsive to the goals of the business and its increasing dynamic character with appropriate analytical and communication skills. Ability to pass a thorough background check and obtain a gaming license is necessary.

This position is open to Tribal and nonTribal members.

Applicants may submit a letter of interest, resume and three references to:

Camille Mercier
Director of Human Resources
Spirit Mountain Gaming, Inc.
PO Box 39
Grand Ronde, OR 97347

Deadline to apply is July 24, 2009.

Donations needed

The Grand Ronde Community Resource Center has a few fundraisers and other projects planned this year and is seeking donations, etc., for the following:

- **Spaghetti Feed and Auction in September:** Seeking donated items for a live and silent auction and/or food donations for the meal. The center will provide documentation of your donation for tax purposes.
- **Community Cookbook:** Looking for your favorite recipe. If you have a recipe you'd like to share, please e-mail it to grcrc@hotmail.com or mail to GRCRC, P.O. Box 55, Grand Ronde, OR 97347. Please include the name of dish, recipe, your name for publication in the cookbook and a phone number to contact you if there are any questions.
- **Food Preservation:** The center is still seeking food dehydrators for its food preservation program. If you have one you'd like to donate, please e-mail or call and leave a message at 503-879-5731.
- **Coupon Program:** The center is looking for food and non-food item coupons for its coupon program. ■

Cultural Resources seeks plankhouse giveaway items

In anticipation of an early fall opening of the Grand Ronde plankhouse, the Tribe's Cultural Resources Department is seeking donations of giveaway items for the planned blessing ceremony.

Giveaway items can be about almost anything, including beads and blankets, but not alcohol or drugs.

The items are intended to recognize people from outside the Grand Ronde community who will come for the blessing ceremony.

"By having people from outside the community, they are helping to strengthen our house," said Tribal member and Cultural Resources Protection Coordinator Eirik Thorsgard.

Giveaway items can be dropped off at the Cultural Resources Department in Grand Ronde or at the Tribal satellite offices in Eugene and Portland.

For more information or to check on the appropriateness of possible giveaway items, call Angella McCallister at 503-879-2268, Thorsgard at 503-879-1630 or Language & Culture Specialist Bobby Mercier at 503-879-2076.

An article on proper plankhouse protocol written by Cultural Resources Department staff will appear in *Smoke Signals* closer to the blessing ceremony. ■