

Educational visit



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Mark Jeffery, second from right, the new superintendent for the Willamina School District, listens to Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker, lower left, during a meet and greet with Tribal Council on Wednesday, Sept. 16. From left, Tribal Council member Toby McClary, Tribal Secretary Kathleen Tom and Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy listen. Also attending the meeting, but not pictured, were Tribal Vice Chair Reyn Leno and Tribal Council members Steve Bobb Sr., Chris Mercier and Wink Soderberg.

Christmas tree decorating contest

The Elders' Activity Center is looking for teams to decorate a Christmas tree.

Voting will be conducted by people who come into the Elders' Activity Center. Prizes will be \$100 for first place, \$75 for second place and \$50 for third place.

The trees then will be sold by silent auction.

Decorating will begin at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6.

Call Elder Activity Assistant Daniel Ham at 503-879-2233 to sign up your team or call Tribal Elder Louise Medeiros at 503-879-4312 for more information. ■

Restoration Committee seeks volunteers

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will celebrate its 26th Restoration Celebration on Sunday, Nov. 22, in the Tribal gymnasium.

Tribal member volunteers are needed to help plan this year's celebration. Volunteers will work with the Tribe's Public Affairs Department.

To volunteer, contact the Public Affairs Department at 800-422-0232, ext. 1920, or via e-mail at publicaffairs@grandronde.org.

Deadline to volunteer is Friday, Oct. 9. ■

CULTURAL GATHERINGS

■ OCT. 16-17: **GIVING BACK TO THE CIRCLE ANNIVERSARY POWWOW.** Arlee Powwow Grounds, Powwow Road. **ARLEE, MT.** 406-781-5470 or i-candace@hotmail.com.

■ NOV. 14: **32ND ANNUAL RESTORATION POWWOW AND CELEBRATION.** Chinook Winds Casino, 1777 N.W. 44th St. **LINCOLN CITY, OR.** 1-800-922-1399, ext. 1230.

■ NOV. 20-22: **NATIVE AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL.** Chinook Winds Casino, 1777 N.W. 44th St. **LINCOLN CITY, OR.**

If you or anyone you know has information on cultural events happening, Smoke Signals would be glad to list it in our Cultural Gatherings. Please e-mail news@grandronde.org or write to Smoke Signals, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

Unmarked grave sites

If anyone knows the location of an unmarked grave or knows the name of someone who was buried at the Grand Ronde Cemetery and their grave has not been marked, contact Mike Larsen, Facilities Manager, at 503-879-2407. ■

Youth Canoe Club

Every Wednesday 4- 5 p.m.
Youth Education Building

Contact Lisa Leno at 503-879-1471 or Travis Mercier at 503-879-2143 for more information.

'People need to learn, plan and protect'

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fect Elders with reduced immune systems.

Five months later, Tribal and Spirit Mountain Casino representatives are preparing for another round of H1N1 — formerly known as "swine flu" — but are taking a more proactive and measured approach to a possible pandemic.

During a Sept. 22 meeting in the Governance Center, Tribal member and Spirit Mountain Casino Human Resources Director Camille Mercier ran through a PowerPoint presentation presented previously to casino managers.

Mercier said that seasonal flu shots will be offered at the casino for employees on Oct. 7 and 22, and shots specifically for H1N1 will be scheduled when a vaccine becomes available nationally in October.

"Unless you already have a compromised immune system, H1N1 is just a very severe flu," Mercier said. "You get really sick and you're really contagious."

Mercier segued into the recommendations that are circulating everywhere and will hopefully be common knowledge soon.

If you're ill, stay home and don't expose other people, Mercier said. The H1N1 flu can last anywhere from three to seven to 10 days.

People should have a two-week supply of medicine, food and cleaning supplies in their homes just in case the pandemic becomes widespread.

To prevent contracting H1N1, people should practice good hand-washing techniques; use antibacterial gels that have at least 60 percent alcohol content; cover their coughs and sneezes; cleanse and disinfect their work areas often; and be cautious when dealing with animals.

"People need to learn, plan and protect," Mercier said.

"Education is a key part," Tribal member and Tribal Executive Officer Chris Leno said.

Leno said that the Tribe is encouraging employees to check their paid time-off balances to ensure they have enough hours banked in case they contract H1N1 and must stay home for seven to 10 days.

Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy asked if local and state public health authorities have the authority to quarantine either Spirit Mountain Casino or the Tribal Governance Center if an H1N1 outbreak occurred.

Health & Wellness Assistant Executive Director Allyson Lecatsas said that public health officials are taking a more "hands-off" approach to H1N1, leaving it to organizations, schools and businesses to make their own closure decision.

Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor said that the H1N1 level of infection is not as severe as the strain that occurred in the spring, which prompted Lecatsas to report that the World Health Organization is no longer separating flu reports between seasonal and H1N1 strains unless a patient is hospitalized or dies.

"It's not as virulent as thought," Lecatsas said.

Tribal member and Tribal Public Works Department Manager Lewis Younger said that Tribal cleaning crews have "geared up," purchasing extra supplies in case of an outbreak on the Tribal campus.

According to Tribal member Mark LaBonte, swing shift house-keeping supervisor, the Tribe uses two products — Saniguard and Virex TB — that are certified by the Environmental Protection Agency to kill influenza strains.

LaBonte said the Tribe also has purchased a floor cleaner that can

kill the flu virus.

"Currently, our preliminary plan that is effective immediately for the disinfection of our facilities is to wipe down all surfaces with our Virex TB and then follow up by using the Saniguard," LaBonte said.

"I have two staff members scheduled at the Elders' Activity Center to wipe down all chairs, tables, doorknobs, restrooms and surfaces during the evening to ensure that all areas of the EAC are disinfected."

Similar cleaning protocols have been established for the Tribe's educational facilities, Governance Building and Health & Wellness Center, LaBonte said.

"These viruses are called 'enveloped' in terms of their structure," LaBonte said. "Fortunately, they are the easiest ones to kill with chemical disinfection."

Lacatsas added that the Health & Wellness Center will have different waiting rooms to segregate those with flu symptoms in an effort to stifle its spread.

The center started offering seasonal flu shots to clients from 1 to 4 p.m. Thursdays beginning Sept. 24. H1N1 shots will be offered when a vaccine becomes available nationally in October. ■