

# Smoke Signals

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

FEBRUARY 1, 2010

www.grandronde.org

UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

## Relief efforts

**Tribe donates \$10,000 to Mercy Corps to help Haitian earthquake victims**

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Just as they did in 2005 after a tsunami killed more than 225,000 people living in and around the Indian Ocean, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Spirit Mountain Casino are coming to the aid of natural disaster victims — this time in Haiti.

On Jan. 19, the Grand Ronde Tribal Council donated \$5,000 from the Tribe and \$5,000 from Spirit Mountain Casino to Mercy Corps, the Portland-based non-profit that works to alleviate suffering and poverty throughout the world, for its relief efforts in Haiti.

In 2005, the Tribe and casino donated a combined \$10,000 to the American Red Cross to help tsunami victims in the Indian Ocean area.

"The donation from the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to Mercy Corps' response to the Haiti earthquake will do a great deal of good on the ground helping survivors immediately access water and food," said Johanna Thoeresz, vice president of development at Mercy Corps.

"Mercy Corps specializes in meeting the immediate needs of survivors and quickly transitioning into longer term recovery and rebuilding programs. This generous donation will go a long way to helping the people of Haiti find hope for the future."

And the Tribal giving will not stop there.

Spirit Mountain Casino Chief Executive Officer Rodney Ferguson said the casino will request donations from guests and employees to aid the earthquake victims in Haiti.

"There will be a centralized drop box for

See HAITI  
continued on page 8

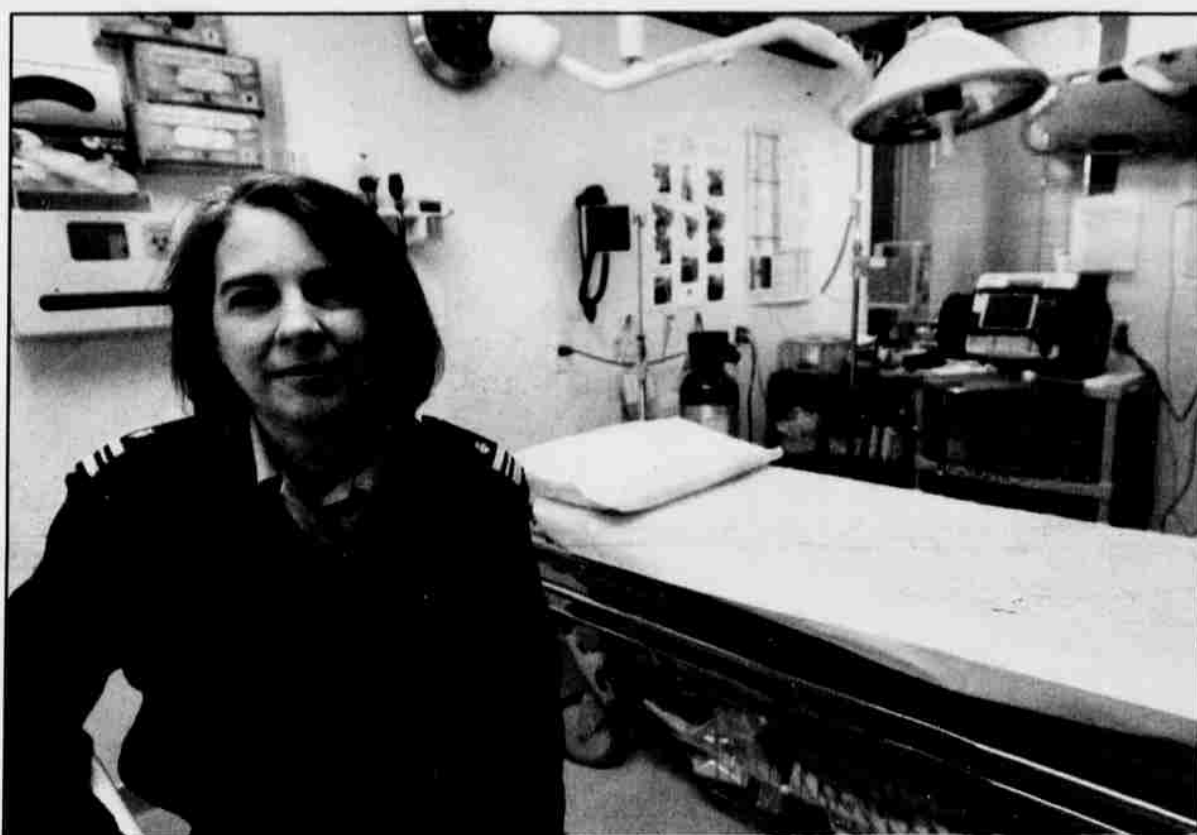


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Jennifer Leggett, a registered nurse and the Tribe's nurse supervisor, will likely be deployed to Haiti in early February in her role as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Public Health Service. She will spend two weeks aboard the Navy hospital ship The Comfort, helping people injured in the earthquake that struck Port-au-Prince, the country's capital.

## Tribal health services may be affected

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Although Haiti is about 3,400 miles from Grand Ronde, the earthquake relief effort there might have an effect on Tribal health services here.

Most immediately, and most likely, Tribal

Nurse Supervisor Jennifer Leggett will be deployed in February to Haiti in her role as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Public Health Service, one of the country's seven

See LEGGETT  
continued on page 8

## Tribal member to renew relations with Maori



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member and Language and Cultural Specialist Bobby Mercier

**Bobby Mercier taking respect to ceremonies in New Zealand**

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

When Tribal member and Language and Cultural Specialist Bobby Mercier travels to the north island of New Zealand on Feb. 1, he will renew Grand Ronde relations with the Māori Tribe started almost five

years ago.

As ambassador of the Grand Ronde Tribe, Mercier will join two others from the Suquamish Tribe in Washington state. On his back, Mercier will carry the responsibility of a nation everywhere he goes, showing with respect what it means to be a member of the Grand Ronde Tribe.

Last summer, when Māori ambassadors Tamahou Temara and Francis Mamaku came to the United States to join in the Northwest

nations' Tribal Canoe Journey, Mercier said, "They had a real good effect on our kids — the way they carried themselves and treated everybody with respect. They're a really respectful people."

"They pulled in our canoes every day. They shared in our culture. They showed our kids the men's and women's haka," that Mercier described as "their performance,

See MAORI  
continued on page 5