

Check distribution day: Friday, March 12

The quarterly per capita distribution for March will be mailed from REDW in Albuquerque, N.M., on Friday, March 12. No checks will be available for pick-up. REDW can no longer accept changes for addresses, direct deposit or tax elections on the March 12 check.

Any other questions or concerns, contact Liz Leno at 503-879-2082 or Hollie Mercier at 503-879-2490. ■

Eugene office slates input meeting on March 11

Tribal staff at the Eugene satellite office are inviting Tribal members to stop by, visit and help with planning for 2010 as the office turns 5 years old from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 11.

"Come with ideas on how we can make the Eugene office even better," said Jon Darcy-Chantell, Tribal Services representative. "We want to do more to serve you, the Grand Ronde Tribal members."

For more information, call Darcy-Chantell at 541-484-7085, ext. 221, or visit the office at 711 Country Club Road, Suite 1A. ■

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. ■

'It's off to a slow start'**TRANSIT continued
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who live in the Salem-Dallas area, but the transit district is experiencing very little ridership from the Dallas area, which is served by the Rickreall Park & Ride stop. The transit district is currently selling 30 monthly passes through payroll deductions and direct sales, she added.

"Day pass riders are exceeding regular commuters," Mercier said, citing December statistics that showed 1,647 riders, which included 675 rides by monthly pass holders.

Mercier said there were more than 900 trips by Salem area riders who probably went to Spirit Mountain Casino for entertainment, which helps the casino during the current economic downturn and provides Salem area residents another option for getting to Spirit Mountain.

Mercier, who used to work for the Tribe as finance director, said she commuted between Salem and Grand Ronde for six and a half years and knows how time- and money-consuming it can be. In addition, taking a good number of commuters off the roads helps the environment, as well as traffic safety.

"This was a missing piece and I'm fearful it will go away if we don't get ridership up," she said.

Most of the operating costs for the transit service are being paid by federal Tribal Transit and state Special Transportation funds with fares and the state's Business Energy Tax Credit program covering the rest of the expenses.

Mercier said the April promotional push will feature specially targeted days, such as Tribal Member Day, Elders' Day, Tribal Youth Day and Tribal Council Day.

The Transit District also will

promote all the things a person can do once they arrive in Salem, from shopping to visiting the A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village children's museum to riding the Salem Carousel.

Mercier said the bus service also can be an important transportation option for Grand Ronde youth who obtain summer jobs in the Salem area.

The ridership promotional push also will focus on getting more Salem riders to ride to the casino.

"There is a lack of understanding and knowledge in the Salem area that there is a whole community out here," Mercier said.

Tribal Housing Authority Executive Director Carina Kistler said her department would include fliers about the bus service in welcoming packets provided to new Tribal housing residents.

Tribal Planning and Grants Development Manager Kim Rogers said the Tribe has funding for the current level of service through June, and will re-evaluate frequency if ridership does not increase.

"It's off to a slow start," Mercier said, "but there is the potential for the two communities to connect. I want to see that the Tribe is given credit for setting up the service between the West Valley and Salem."

Bus fares are \$3 per one-way trip, payable upon boarding the bus, or \$75 for a monthly pass that can be purchased at the Salem-Keizer Transit Mall, Tribal Governance Center front desk or at the casino.

For Tribal governmental or casino employees, the passes can be purchased on a pre-tax basis through the respective Human Resources departments.

For more information, check the Web site www.cherriots.org and search for the Grand Ronde 2X Express route. ■

Tribal descendant dancing through life**Anguiano hopes to offer classes in Grand Ronde**

By Scarlett Holtz

Smoke Signals contributing writer

Tribal descendant Chella Anguiano, daughter of Tribal member Susan (Taggart) Anguiano, began teaching dance classes in January in Lincoln City.

"Dancing has always been a dream of mine as long as I can remember," Chella says.

Ever since she was a little girl, she has loved dancing, Susan says.

Chella was on the Oregon City Dance Team when she was in middle school.

"Dancing has been a large part of my life," Chella says. "I can remember when I was a very little girl dancing with my dad. He is the biggest reason I love to dance so much."

"I was always his 'Tiny Dancer.' My dad was an excellent dancer and singer as well. My dad passed away in July 2008."

She remembers being in fourth grade and participating in the school talent show.

"My friends and I danced and made music videos," Chella says. "We called ourselves 'The Sugar Girls.'"

Although grade school was a difficult time for her because of almost constant moving, she didn't let it affect her passion for dancing.

"Although this did affect my schooling, it never affected my dancing," she says. "I made friends quickly in each new school, and we were always able to make up a dance routine and put on a wonder-

ful show."

While attending Tillamook High School in 2002, she became involved with the Tillamook High School Dance Team and Choir. She choreographed several musicals, including "Music Man," "Beauty and the Beast" and "The Wizard of Oz."

"It has taken me a long time to get where I am at today," she says. "I have spent a lot of time in dance class. I have participated in numerous musicals, ballroom dances and dance clubs, hip-hop and dance aerobics."

She attended dance class at the Billings Dance Academy in Portland for one year and began taking dance classes after graduating from Tillamook High School in June 2005. She learned more ballroom dances, West Coast swing, East Coast swing and salsa at the Billings Academy.

So far, she says, "My dreams are coming true and I believe that life is just going to get better and better everyday. I now have a 5-month-old son. I love being a mom, but I cannot wait to begin offering dance classes in the Grand Ronde and Willamina area."

"I will be teaching hip-hop, tap, jazz, cabaret, salsa aerobics and swing aerobics," she says.

"Someday, I hope to be teaching my son to dance as well. His father is not too happy with the prospect of his son dancing, but for now that is the way it is. As for me, I will continue to dance and see just where it takes me." ■

Longhouse blessing

Photo by Michelle Alaimo

April Campbell, Tribal member and the Tribe's Education Division manager, left, and Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryl A. Kennedy, right, gift Western Oregon University's Associate Provost Dave McDonald with a Pendleton blanket during the Native American Longhouse blessing at the Monmouth school on Thursday, Feb. 18. The blanket is for use in the longhouse, which is a lounge area that provides Western Oregon's Native American students a space for gathering, studying or relaxing, that opened last summer. Tribal members Bobby Mercier, Tribal Language and Culture specialist, and Eirik Thorsgard, Tribal Cultural Protection coordinator, performed the blessing ceremony.