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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA



**Casino paying fares between
Grand Ronde-Salem in April**

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

This is not — repeat NOT — an April Fool's Day joke: Rides between Grand Ronde and Salem will be free for the entire month.

In a combined effort between the Salem Area Mass Transit District and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to increase ridership on the Route 2X — Grand Ronde Express bus, Spirit Mountain Casino will pay the forgiven fares through the end of the month.

Transit District Finance Director Pat Mercier said the casino sponsorship will cost about \$4,500.

"We are hoping the increased ridership from Salem will help recover those costs for them," Mercier, who used to work for the Tribe as Finance Director, said.

"This decision was made in support of various promotions being done to raise awareness of the service, and help individuals in Salem and Grand Ronde understand how easy it is to use transit and try it for the first time. Hopefully to then become regular users."

The bus service between Salem and Grand Ronde costs \$3 each way, or \$75 for a monthly pass. It started in January 2009 with nine round trips daily Monday through Friday between the Salem-Keizer Transit Mall and Spirit Mountain Casino.

It has since expanded and now offers 10 round trips during weekdays with stops

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Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Mychal Leno, Tribal member and Player Services manager at Spirit Mountain Casino, reads "The Catcher in the Rye" as she rides the Salem-Keizer Transit Cherriots Route 2X - Grand Ronde Express bus to work on Tuesday, March 23.

Public transit is well worth it

By Mychal Leno

Spirit Mountain Player Services Manager

Have you been contemplating riding the bus to and from work, but you haven't quite made the leap? Why not? Personally, I also enjoy my alone time driving in

my car, reflecting on the previous day, thinking of all the things to be done that day. No disruptions, no obligation to fill the silence.

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First cousins make a second life together



Photo by Ron Karten

Tribal Elders Betty Reed and Ivan Jeffers sit at home on the couch in their living room. They are first cousins who decided living alone was not the answer.

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

EUGENE — Tribal Elders and first cousins Ivan Jeffers, 89, and Betty Reed, 82, got together in 1976 after Jeffers' wife, Velma Tustiston, who grew up in the Crow, Ore., area, passed on and Reed's husband of 25 years, Beuford Reed, originally from Wisconsin, left.

They share a grandfather, William Jeffers, who was father to



their fathers. Having known each other all their lives, they decided that it was crazy to live alone when they had each other, and, anyway, Ivan's place is paid for.

Today, the small mobile home they share west of Eugene spreads out in the front with tarps and gardens. With firewood neatly stacked, they're already prepared for the start of winter, 2011.

Ivan has been building a raised flower bed in the front yard that still sits on a wooden base, holding it off the ground at a good working

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