

Carving talk



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tony Johnson (Chinook), left, the Tribe's cultural education coordinator, talks about one of his carvings with an attendee of his presentation on contemporary Chinookan art in the Miller Gallery at the Portland Art Museum on Thursday, April 1.



2005 — Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski signed an amended compact between the state and Warm Springs Tribe that would possibly allow an off-reservation casino. The amended compact was being questioned by other Oregon Tribes, including Grand Ronde, because of fairness and sovereignty issues.

2000 — The 1950 Grand Ronde Indian Grade School championship basketball team reunited for a 50-year reunion in the Tribal Community Center. Team members were Jauncey Perrizo, Miles Hadley, Frank Tolman, Robert Schenck, Frank Keyton, Bill McDougall, Murch White, Larry Anderson and Percy Brandon.

1995 — The Tribe signed an agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for maintaining the Nelson's Checkermallow plant, which was transplanted when it was found to be growing in the path of the new Tribal casino. Two-hundred and ninety-nine of the plants were moved to a new location on Tribal property in an effort headed by Spirit Mountain Development Corp. Executive Assistant Sanda "Sam" Henny.

1990 — Tribal Chairman Mark Mercier, Tribal Council member Bob Mercier and Tribal Forester Cliff Adams posed in front of new flatbed trucks purchased by the Tribe. The trucks were converted and used as fire trucks on the Reservation.

1985 — The Tribe's historian, Dr. Barbara Lane of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, attended the April 14 General Council meeting.

Yesteryears is a look back at Tribal history in five-year increments through the pages of Smoke Signals.

Transit service stresses 'full circle recycling'

'Free fare' April continuing between Grand Ronde, Salem

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

People riding for free on Salem-Keizer Transit between Grand Ronde and Salem during April probably don't realize that the oil powering the bus previously cooked the meals served at Spirit Mountain Casino.

Through a partnership between Salem-Keizer Transit, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Spirit Mountain Casino, people riding the bus are part of a program described as "full circle recycling."

"For the entire month of April, you can leave your car at home and ride the bus free to have a meal at the casino, knowing that the meal that you eat is being prepared using cooking oil that is being recycled, and that oil is helping power the bus that you are riding out for your meal," said Transit District Finance Director Pat Mercier.

"Its cooking oil ends up at Pacific Biodiesel in Salem, which is the supplier for biodiesel, which ends up in Salem-Keizer Transit clean diesel buses, which then provide bus service between Salem and Grand Ronde."

During April, Spirit Mountain Casino is picking up the fares for rides between Salem and Grand Ronde as its contribution to helping increase ridership.

Mercier, who used to commute between Grand Ronde and Salem when she worked for the Tribe, stresses the financial and environmental benefits of riding the bus.

She says the average person commuting between Salem and Grand Ronde, driving at least 35 miles each way, will use almost three gallons of fuel. If they drive five days a week, 50 weeks a year, that person would use an average of 700 gallons of fuel each year. At \$3 a gallon, that is more than \$2,000 in fuel alone without considering the cost of maintaining and insuring a vehicle.

Mercier said the environmental costs are "staggering."

"This same driver is adding nine tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere and contributing 13 tons of greenhouse gases," she said.

The Tribe's Spirit Mountain Casino has long worked on recycling, including staff dedicated to keeping waste

out of landfills. Annually, the casino recycles 138 tons of cardboard and more than 51 tons of commingled plastic, paper and tin, and recycles glass.

The Route 2X — Grand Ronde Express started in January 2009 with nine round trips daily Monday through Friday between the Salem-Keizer Transit Mall and Spirit Mountain Casino. It costs \$3 each way, or \$75 for a monthly pass.

The service has since expanded and now offers 10 round trips during weekdays with stops in front of the Tribal Governance Center at 7:45 a.m. and 5:10 p.m. There is no weekend service.

The April push to increase ridership is prompted by concerns that low use could jeopardize the transit service's continued availability at current levels to both Grand Ronde and Salem residents.

On Tuesday, April 13, Tribal Elders rode the bus to attend an exhibition and lunch at Mission Mill Museum in an effort to make them more comfortable with using public transit.

Other events are slated for Earth Day on Thursday, April 22, with a noon luncheon for Tribal staff in the

Governance Center Atrium, during which the new Natural Resources Division video will be shown. In addition, there will be information available from environmentally friendly businesses.

Most of the operating costs for the transit service are 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.

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 of trips if ridership does not increase.

Tribal governmental and casino employees can purchase monthly bus passes on a pre-tax basis through their respective Human Resources departments. Grand Ronde-area residents can purchase monthly passes or day passes at the Tribal Governance Center front desk or at the casino, or pay when boarding the bus.

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

Weekdays (No service on Saturday, Sunday or holidays)

A	B	C	D	E	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
N.E. Park & Ride	Transit Mall	Edgewater/Rosemont	Rickreall Park & Ride	Arrive Spirit Mountain	Leave Spirit Mountain	Tribal Governance Center	Spirit Mountain	Rickreall Park & Ride	Edgewater/Rosemont	Transit Mall	N.E. Park & Ride
5:10a	5:30a	5:33a	5:50a	6:25a	6:30a	-	-	7:00a	7:12a	7:20a	*
*	6:30a	6:33a	6:50a	7:25a	7:30a	7:45a	8:15a	8:45a	8:57a	9:05a	*
*	7:30a	7:33a	7:50a	8:25a	8:30a	-	-	9:00a	9:12a	9:20a	*
*	1:30p	1:33p	1:50p	2:25p	2:30p	-	-	3:00p	3:12p	3:20p	*
*	3:15p	3:18p	3:35p	4:10p	4:20p	-	-	4:50p	5:02p	5:10p	*
*	3:45p	3:48p	4:05p	4:40p	4:55p	5:10p	5:30p	6:00p	6:12p	6:20p	*
*	5:30p	5:33p	5:50p	6:25p	6:30p	-	-	7:00p	7:12p	7:20p	*
*	8:00p	8:03p	8:20p	8:55p	9:00p	-	-	9:30p	9:42p	9:50p	10:05p
*	9:00p	9:03p	9:20p	9:55p	10:00p	-	-	10:30p	10:42p	10:50p	11:05p
10:20p	10:30p	10:33p	10:50p	11:25p	11:30p	-	-	12:00a	12:12a	12:20a	12:35a

Schedule times may change without notice by as much as 3 minutes to adjust to traffic conditions.

* Rt. 17-Market St., has 15 minute service between the N.E. Park & Ride lot and the Transit Center.

