Candidates' Forum attracts about 40 to hear 14 office seekers

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

About 40 Tribal members filled the Tribal gymnasium in Grand Ronde on July 21 to hear from the 14 Tribal members seeking three open Tribal Council seats in the upcoming Sept. 11 election.

All 14 declared candidates attended. They include incumbents Chris Mercier and Tribal Elder Steve Bobb Sr., and the 12 challengers — Tribal Elder Patsy Pullin, Tribal Elder and former Tribal Council member Jack Giffen Jr., Tribal Elder Dakota Whitecloud, Tribal Elder Alton Butler, Lelani Folden, Shelley Hanson, Greg Shandy, former Tribal Council member Andy Jenness, Denise Harvey, Tribal Elder Duane Wheeler, Tribal Elder and former Tribal Council member Ed Larsen and Michael Bolton.

Tribal Elder Betty Bly, who was nominated to run in late June, dropped out of the race.

Moderated by Tribal member and Tribal Executive Officer Chris Leno, the forum allowed candidates to answer two questions each with a two-minute time limit per question, and then allowed each candidate a two-minute closing statement. Most choose to read from their statements appearing in the July *Tilixum Wawa*.

Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Eric Bernando takes notes as Tribal Council candidates answer questions during the Candidates' Forum in the Tribal gymnasium on Wednesday, July 21.

Because the forum ran so smoothly and was ahead of schedule, Leno joked that candidates could have "two minutes and five seconds" for their closing statements.

The Candidates' Forum officially started at 6:24 p.m. and wrapped up before 8 p.m.

Questions were submitted by audience members and placed in a raffle drum. They were drawn randomly for each candidate in the first round, and then re-submitted into the raffle drum for a second round of questioning with the provision that a candidate would not have to answer the same question twice.

The forum was conducted alphabetically, starting with Bobb and ending with Whitecloud.

Tribal member questions ran the gamut of Tribal concerns, from candidates' views on the Tribal Ethics Ordinance to whether programs or per capita were more important places to spend Tribal dollars to what a candidate would do for Tribal youth if they were elected.

Other topics of concern raised by Tribal member questions were the impact of a private casino in Portland on Tribal finances and a candidate's opinion on past Tribal Council spending; whether candidate forums are a good idea; whether Tribal members should have to pay a co-pay for health insurance; whether Tribal audits and investigations should be made available to the Tribal membership; whether the Tribe should establish a Tribal Employment Rights Office; whether there should be stricter rules for Tribal Council attendance and absences; ideas on how to fix enrollment problems; and how to protect Tribal treaty and sovereignty rights.

Tribal member and Tribal A/V Network Technician Wendell Olson filmed the Candidates' Forum and it has been posted on the Tribal Web site — www.grandronde.org — for viewing.

Tribal Elder Jolanda Catabay delivered the invocation and hungry Tribal members dined on a boxed dinner from the Mek Mek House in Grand Ronde Station.

Tribal Council is guaranteed at least one "new" member this election cycle with incumbent June Sell-Sherer not seeking re-election.

Ballots were mailed to Tribal members on July 28 and are due back by Sept. 11. ■

GED Classes

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:30 – 4 p.m.
Tribal Education Building
Contact Joanne Carr at 503-879-2282
or joanne.carr@grandronde.org ■

CTGR Annual fish distribution

Natural Resources Division Fish Lab

ELDER DAY
Must be an ELDER or picking up for other ELDERS ONLY.
Thursday, Aug. 19, 9 a.m.– 4 p.m.

All MEMBERSHIP
Friday, Aug. 20, 9 a.m.– 4 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 21, 9 a.m. – Noon

Must show Tribal I.D.
If picking up for others, a signed note with
copy of Tribal I.D. is required
No early or late pick up.
Questions? Contact Angella McCallister at 503-879-2376.

2010 SUBSISTANCE - RELEASE FORM

I agree to take full responsibility for picking up salmon for my family. I have obtained Tribal ID and notes from each member. Listed below are the names and roll numbers I will be picking up for today.

NAME	ROLL #	NAME	ROLL #

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Meet and greet

Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Greg Norton, Bureau of Indian Affairs Siletz Agency superintendent, second from right, had a meet and greet with Tribal Council on Wednesday, July 14. Tribal Council members at the meeting included Tribal Vice Chair Reyn Leno, left, Tribal Council member Toby McClary, second from left, and Tribal Council Secretary Kathleen Tom, right. Also in attendance, but not pictured, were Tribal Council members Steve Bobb Sr., Chris Mercier, June Sell-Sherer and Wink Soderberg.

Class of 1950 sets 60th reunion

The Willamina High School Class of 1950 will hold its 60th reunion on Saturday, Aug. 21. Other Willamina High classes and friends also are invited to attend.

For more information, contact Glenva Clark at 928-271-9544. ■

Recycle Center moved

The Recycle Center has been moved temporarily to 9675 Grand Ronde Road. (The Curl Property next to Procurement). We will leave it open every day, as long as there isn't any personal garbage or other materials (couches, mattresses, etc.) dumped there. For more information, contact Tribal Facilities Manager Michael J. Larsen at 503-879-2407. ■