

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. ■

Service recognition



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Debbie Marrington, Human Resources office assistant and Tribal Elder, pours caramel on top of Joe Loomis' ice cream during the 2010 second quarter Employee Recognition Ice Cream Social at the Community Center on Wednesday, Aug. 4. Loomis is a Tribal member and the Tribe's limited energy telecommunications technician. Fifty-five employees were recognized for hitting their years-of-service milestones.

OPEN FOR COMMENT

TRIBAL BUILDING CODE ORDINANCE

The Tribal Council, in consultation with the Tribal Attorney's Office, is considering adoption of a Tribal Building Code Ordinance. The proposed Ordinance was given a First Reading at the July 14, 2010, Tribal Council meeting.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to safeguard life and property by regulating all construction-related activities and requiring building permits on Tribal lands as well as encouraging the use of innovative materials and techniques consistent with cultural designs and methods.

The Ordinance adopts the Oregon Structural, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical, Residential, Manufactured Dwelling and Parks, Manufactured Dwelling Installation, Boiler and Pressure Vessel, and Elevator Specialty Codes, the Oregon Fire Code, and the NFPA 909 Code for the Protection of Cultural Resource Properties.

The Ordinance calls for the appointment of a Building Official to administer the code, enforce compliance and issue permits. It also sets forth a waiver provision as well as a dispute resolution process.

For a copy of the Tribal Building Code Ordinance please contact the Tribal Attorney's Office at 503-879-4664. The Tribal Council invites comment on the Ordinance. Please send your comments to the Tribal Attorney's Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347. Comments must be received by Aug. 30, 2010. ■

'It looks like pretty sloppy work'

CASINO continued from front page

Democrat John Kitzhaber said he opposes the location and concept of off-reservation casinos in Oregon while Republican Chris Dudley said he opposes any expansion of gambling in Oregon.

Justin Martin, Grand Ronde Tribal member and lobbyist, reiterated the Tribe's long-standing stance that an off-reservation casino for one Tribe would open the door to casino expansion across the state. He said the Grand Ronde Tribe, if necessary, would sue to stop it.

Oregon Rep. David Wu repeated his opposition as well.

"A gambling casino does not belong in any of America's uniquely spectacular landscapes, and it is utterly absurd that the Bureau of Indian Affairs has recommended siting a casino in Oregon's Columbia River Gorge," Wu said.

"We continue to believe a better approach is to focus on maintaining Oregon's one Tribe, on-reservation casino policy and encourage Warm Springs to seek a suitable on-reservation alternative that doesn't damage the Gorge environment," said Grand Ronde Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor.

Taylor said that the Grand Ronde Tribe, along with its partners, will ask for an extension of the public comment period on the final environmental impact statement from 30 to 90 days.

"In the end," she said, "any Gorge casino decision will require approval of Oregon's next governor. Both are on record opposing a Gorge casino."

Meanwhile, Initiative Petition 76, one of two initiatives necessary to allow construction of a privately-

owned casino at the abandoned greyhound race track in Wood Village, has failed, falling almost 6,000 valid signatures short of the 110,358 signatures needed.

The initiative petition proposed a constitutional amendment that would allow the first — and only — private casino to open in Oregon.

Only 61 percent of submitted signatures were deemed valid by the Secretary of State's Office. Very few initiative petitions over the years have submitted a smaller percentage of valid signatures, department spokesman Don Hamilton said.

"It looks like pretty sloppy work," said Martin, who also represents the Oregon Tribal Gaming Alliance.

"And the realities are, just because you spent \$1.4 million to get signatures doesn't mean you can buy your way into the Oregon Constitution. We know that Oregon voters are savvy when it comes to looking at what they want to put in their Constitution.

"I think these rich guys from Lake Oswego underestimate the intelligence of Oregon voters."

But the petition is not dead yet. Oregon City attorney Matthew Rossman and businessman Bruce Studer, the petitioners, appealed the Secretary of State's count to a Marion County judge who gave them until Aug. 20 to demonstrate that the number of valid signatures was enough to meet the 110,358-signature threshold.

Initiative Petition 77, the companion piece, found a spot on the November ballot with less than a 100-signature margin. Because 77 authorizes a change to Oregon statutes, not the Constitution, it required almost 30,000 fewer signatures: 82,769 to be exact. The

Secretary of State's Office deemed 82,865 to be valid.

Initiative Petition 77 would authorize the private casino in Wood Village and dedicates 25 percent of monthly "adjusted gross revenues" (income minus gaming payouts) to schools (50 percent), counties (30 percent), the host city (4 percent), the host county (2 percent), Oregon State Police (3 percent), neighboring towns (3 percent each) and the Problem Gambling Treatment Fund (2 percent). \$1 million the first year and \$2 million each year after that comes off the top to pay the Oregon State Lottery that is charged with administering the funds.

Unmentioned by the initiative petition is the likelihood that a successful private casino in the metropolitan area, the size of the one planned, would cut into the heart of State Lottery territory, creating a potential loss for the state, after the private casino contributions, of more than \$26 million a year, according to a financial impact statement by the Secretary of State's Office. The Secretary of State's rosier scenario gives the state less than a \$2 million gain.

By contrast, State Lottery funds in the 2007-09 state budget contributed \$1.3 billion or 8.5 percent of the state's total budget.

In addition, according to the Secretary of State and a recent report by ECONorthwest, a Portland- and Eugene-based research firm hired by the Oregon Tribal Gaming Alliance, a private casino will cause funds to shift from state to local governments, and that will jeopardize the billion dollars worth of Lottery Revenue bonds currently funding large capital projects in the state.

Many large state projects are funded by State Lottery revenue

bonds that are backed by future State Lottery revenue.

State agencies funded by these bonds, including parks, transportation, schools and other projects, could see cuts of as much as \$111.2 million a year, according to ECONorthwest.

Even without passage of the Constitutional amendment, Initiative Petition 77, now called Ballot Measure 75, will appear on the November ballot. Though the casino could not be built until a constitutional amendment allowing it is passed, there is precedent dating back to 1921 for passing an unconstitutional statute that lies dormant until legislation or a ballot measure changes the Constitution to fit the statute.

The petitioners for the private casino have shown plenty of patience with their plans.

The Grand Ronde Tribe, the lead with the eight other federally recognized Oregon Tribes, has fought off similar initiative petitions since 2004. While the Tribes have poured a lot of money into public information and legal campaigns, the petitioners have drawn millions of dollars from Clairvest, a Toronto, Canada, investment company that has backed their efforts.

This is the first year that any part of the effort has made it as a ballot measure.

The Tribal effort to stop this private casino promises to be robust and expensive, but it will start with the basics.

"We're going to continue to let Oregonians know what we've done in our community and beyond," said Martin, "with the (Spirit Mountain) Community Fund, job creation and the economic impact we've had in and around our community." ■