

Food Bank slates fundraising auction

The Grand Ronde Food Bank's second annual fundraising auction will be held 5:15 p.m. Friday, Sept. 24, in the Grand Ronde Tribal gymnasium.

Last year, contributions, donations and participation made the auction a fun, great success, says Grand Ronde Community Resource Center President Nancy Holmes.

This year, the Resource Center is seeking auction donations of quality goods and services that will interest and engage potential bidders.

Suggested items include, but are not limited to, arts and crafts items, cars or motorcycles, quilts and other specialty projects, scrapbooking tools and equipment, jewelry and handmade jewelry boxes, carpentry and/or automotive tools, services such as carpentry, plumbing and carpet cleaning, gourmet meals, bicycles, rocking horses and unique toys, electronics, furniture, hunting and camping equipment, weekend stays at resorts, dinner gift certificates and tickets for events or a night at the movies.

To make a donation or for additional information, contact Food Bank Manager Patrice Qualman at 503-879-5731 or Holmes at 503-879-2445 between noon and 1 p.m. ■

Sign of the times



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

A new sign was recently added to the front of the Elders' Activity Center building. The sign was designed by Tribal member Billy Bobb and constructed by Coastal Signs, which is owned by Bobb.

Moving on



Photo courtesy of the Cultural Resources Department

Tony Johnson talks with Tribal Elder Kathryn Harrison during his farewell party on Friday, Aug. 13. Johnson's last day as the Tribe's cultural education coordinator was Aug. 13, and he is now working for the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe in Washington state.



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Kim Mueller, the Tribe's Collections administrative assistant II, gives Lindy Trolan a kiss on the cheek after her and Kathy Cole, the Tribe's K-5 Chinuk Wawa teacher, gifted Trolan with a Pendleton blanket during her farewell party on Thursday, Aug. 26. After 13 years with the Tribe, Trolan resigned her position as Cultural Collections coordinator and her last day was Friday, Aug. 27. She is moving to England to attend the University of Exeter to obtain a master's degree in Middle East Policy Studies.

'The guests are here to give blessings'

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ish Columbia, and as far south as the Smith River in California are expected to come for the weekend, according to Mercier, Language and Culture specialist for the Tribe.

He has been planning and supervising the event with a team of people, including Tribal Elders Carol Logan and Dolores Parmenter, Tribal members Lenny Logan and Eirik Thorsgard, who is also Cultural Protection coordinator for the Tribe, Brian Krehbiel, also Cultural Education specialist, and Greg Leno, also Maintenance Technician II for the Tribe.

Mercier is leading the final drive to officially open the ceremonial plankhouse.

"This is a big deal because it is the first plankhouse that we have been allowed to build since being removed to the Reservation," said Mercier.

Over the weekend, when hundreds of Native Americans from across the region will arrive and give blessings to the Grand Ronde Tribe's newest building, the plankhouse will share duties with one of the Tribe's oldest buildings, the Community Center, where meals will be served.

As part of protocol, the Tribe will have an usher to guide visitors into the plankhouse, with guests seated on the south side and Grand Ronde Tribal members on the north.

All day Saturday, guests will sing and dance and offer blessings to the Grand Ronde Tribe for the occasion.

"The guests are here to give blessings," said Mercier. "And the Tribal members are here to receive the blessings."

And on Sunday, Grand Ronde Tribal members will do the singing and dancing, a response and

appreciation for the gifts of the blessings.

In the evenings, the plankhouse will be filled with fire, and the fire will be tended as long as people remain in the plankhouse.

"We'll have people taking care of the fire for us," said Mercier. In addition, he said, Cultural Resources will have people around to maintain the decorum and to keep all of the childrens' running down to a minimum.

Until 7 p.m. Sunday, the Community Center will be the site for all meals. Friday evening, reserved for arrivals, will nevertheless feature a dinner including ceremonial elk stew. Breakfasts at the Community Center will take place Saturday and Sunday at 8 a.m. Lunches will be at 1 p.m. The ceremonies at the plankhouse will start at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

After lunch on Sunday, the plankhouse will be the scene of a big Tribal giveaway.

"We've been collecting stuff all year long," said Mercier. "Elders have been contributing the fruits of their craft and art skills to the giveaway. And we're still accepting giveaway items."

Items can be delivered to the Cultural Resources Department or brought to the plankhouse on Sunday. Money donations for the plankhouse also are being accepted by the Tribe's Accounting Division.

For most of the time, an expected overflow crowd will share prayers and blessings, memories and old wisdom.

At 7 p.m. Sunday, however, the last meal will be served in the plankhouse, the first meal to be served there, with ceremonial fish and elk and all the trimmings.

Contact Mercier to volunteer with the opening or for further questions at 503-879-2076. ■