

## Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority



### Board members wanted

#### Board positions open to Tribal or nonTribal applicants

The Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority Board has three Board of Commissioners seats expiring in March 2011. The positions have terms expiring in March 2014.

Interested persons should have a demonstrated interest in housing and experience in the housing field in some capacity, including:

- affordable housing development;
- property management;
- residential building construction;
- housing finance;
- housing planning;
- other housing related areas.

The Board oversees all housing development, housing management, housing programs and housing operations for the Tribe, and is responsible for policy decisions. The board currently meets at 5 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the Housing Authority office in Grand Ronde and holds work sessions as needed.

Interested persons should send a letter outlining their interest and qualifications to: Carina Kistler, Executive Director, Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority, 28450 Tyee Road, Grand Ronde, OR. 97347 or via e-mail to [carina.kistler@grandronde.org](mailto:carina.kistler@grandronde.org).

All letters need to be received by 3 p.m. Friday, Feb. 4, to be considered. The Housing Board candidates will be interviewed by a Housing Board Panel, the board will make recommendations to the Tribe, and final appointments will be made by CTGR Tribal Council. For more information regarding qualifications, contact the Housing Authority at 503-879-2401 or toll-free at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2401.

### Down Payment Assistance Program

The Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority (GRTHA) has 2011 Down Payment Assistance available for applicants with moderate to low incomes. Although the budget for Tribally funded Down Payment Assistance has been committed for 2011, HUD funds may be available for qualified Tribal applicants whose gross household income either meets, or is less than the guidelines below:

Family size / Gross income	
1	\$39,900
2	\$45,600
3	\$51,300
4	\$56,950
5	\$61,550
6	\$66,100
7	\$70,650
8	\$75,200

Please call Nancy Holmes, Homeownership Coordinator, at 503-879-2445, to pre-qualify for HUD funded assistance.

## Units available now!

The Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority is accepting applications for Rental Housing Units in Grand Ronde

1-5 bedroom sized units, many upgrades, parking/storage close to Tribal services.

The units include washer/dryer, refrigerator, dishwasher, in-floor radiant heat, private patio and great views. If you work for the Tribe or casino, you pay no State Income Tax!

The following screening criteria is required for the Market Rate Units: Credit history, landlord history, criminal history, income (at least 3 times monthly rent). One adult member of the household must be an enrolled CTGR Tribal member.

HUD assisted rental applicants must meet low-income and other federal requirements.

Call GRTHA for applications or for further information at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2401, or 503-879-2401.



## Mercier returns to New Zealand for Waka Pageant

Tribal member and Tribal Language and Cultural Specialist Bobby Mercier returned to New Zealand on Monday, Jan. 31, for the second consecutive year to participate in the Waitangi Waka Pageant 2011 in the brisk waters of the Bay of Islands on the north island of the country.

Ceremonial waka (canoes) will ply the waters and international guests, including Mercier and representatives from the Suquamish Tribe in Washington state, will participate.

"Native Americans will be training on the largest waka we have, which is Nga Toki," said Joe Conrad, Nga Waka Federation member and captain of Nga Toki.

Mercier's trip continues the trans-oceanic cultural relationship between the Grand Ronde Tribe and Maoris of New Zealand.

Maori representatives have participated in the Tribal Canoe Journey with the Grand Ronde Tribe and last January Mercier flew to New Zealand to canoe with the Maoris.

Mercier said he will be in New Zealand for 12 days. ■

## Solitude can hint at path of the heart

*In an effort to inform and assist the community at large, Smoke Signals publishes an occasional article addressing various mental health issues written by a member of the Behavioral Health Department at Health & Wellness. We welcome letters, e-mails and questions from people with mental health-related questions at [tom.bender@grandronde.org](mailto:tom.bender@grandronde.org).*

**By Tom Bender**

*Tribal Mental Health counselor*

Two years ago, as an assignment, I stood motionless for 20 minutes among a lush menagerie of tall, potted house plants.

The house was dark save for a string of Christmas lights and a lamp in the adjoining room. Twenty minutes of standing and breathing — no TV, no music, no computers.

It was a little rattling at first, this *not doing*. My mind would wander about for a bit, and I would gently rein it back into the moment.

Just being.

How many of us go from one set of distractions to the next? I have met people who struggled so deeply with being alone that they preferred to hop from one unfulfilling relationship to the next rather than experience the totality of their being. Many people remain in abusive relationship for this very reason. We would rather stay put in the familiar comfort of our suffering rather than face ourselves in quiet solitude.

So what is it about being alone that scares us? My guess is, when we slow down we start to feel the parts of ourselves we'd rather avoid. Guilt, shame and hurt are big ones, and we aren't crazy about sadness, pain, anger or boredom either.

At an early age, we learn to push down, repress and distract ourselves from our emotional "owies." Unfortunately, this means we never really give ourselves a chance to heal.

Take a moment now to slow down. Put this paper down, turn off your cell phone and music, and just *be* for three minutes. While you do it, gently notice what your mind does during this time. What feelings come up, what memories or distractions do you long to create. If/when you allow your thoughts to carry you away, gently bring your attention back to the present.

For those of you who did the exercise — let's call it an exploration — how was it? What feelings (positive, negative or neutral) came up for you while you were *just being*? Welcome to the *You*. Any sense of struggle or discomfort you experienced *may* be a signpost pointing to what we in counseling call, *your emotional work*. Quite possibly, however, if but for a brief moment, you also experienced a sense of your own beauty, your own divinity, your own heart. Welcome to *You*.

A handful of years ago, while visiting the United States, the Dalai Lama was informed that Americans struggled with self-hate and low self-esteem. The idea was so unfathomable to him that he couldn't understand what the speaker was trying to say.

When the Dalai Lama finally "got" what was being said, he asked in all sincerity, "But don't they know how precious they are?"

To be with one's self is to walk the path of the heart.

**Authors note:** Dear Reader: I will be writing one more article in this mental health series, to appear in the March edition of *Smoke Signals*. I am leaving the employ of the Tribe come March 25 to move to the high desert paradise of New Mexico. Big thanks to Dean Rhodes and the staff at *Smoke Signals*. And for those of you who e-mailed me your kind comments and feedback, *muchas gracias*. ■