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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Amendment proceeding in Congress

Tribe seeks streamlined process for taking former land back into trust

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

An amendment to the 1988 Grand Ronde Reservation Act that would streamline how the Tribe takes former reservation land back into Tribal ownership has been introduced in both the House of Representatives and Senate in Washington, D.C.

The amendment has the unanimous support of

Oregon's Democratic delegation, which includes Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Representatives Earl Blumenauer, Peter DeFazio, Kurt Schrader and David Wu.

The amendment would end the current two-step process that requires the Grand Ronde Tribe to take each piece of former reservation land into trust with approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and then request that it be designated reservation land. The amendment would allow the Tribe to combine the process for property that was within the boundaries of the original reservation.

"The current process is time consuming and often takes years to complete," Tribal Attorney Rob Greene said. "The amendment means a significant savings of time and resources" to the Tribe and federal government.

"Our Tribal people have worked tirelessly to pursue our goals of sovereignty by buying back parcels of our original reservation and providing on-reservation jobs and services to our members," said Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A.

See AMENDMENT
continued on page 10

Celebrating Lottie's Life

Hundreds join Child in saying goodbye in Tribal gymnasium

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

Timing is everything. Or at least it was for the hundreds of family and friends who attended the recent Celebration of Life for Tribal Elder Lottie Child, 62.

Lines formed on both sides of a hospital bed in the Tribal gymnasium at about 2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15. Two-and-a-half hours later, Child, resting comfortably in the bed, was still exchanging greetings and stories, still alert and excited about the celebration she insisted upon having while she was still alive.

Child was remembered as active, skilled and caring by people who have been with her throughout her life. The doctors tell her she is succumbing to cancer and she was facing her third bout during the celebration, coming just after removal of a large brain tumor and a series of strokes that left her paralyzed from the waist down.

"Three years ago," said her daughter, Brandy Farmer of Vale, "the doctors told her she had three months to live."

Still, said Farmer, "She is very happy and ready. She is more concerned about how we're taking it."

There was no shortage of tears during the afternoon.

Tribal Elder Roselee Hall, her niece, but the same age as Child,

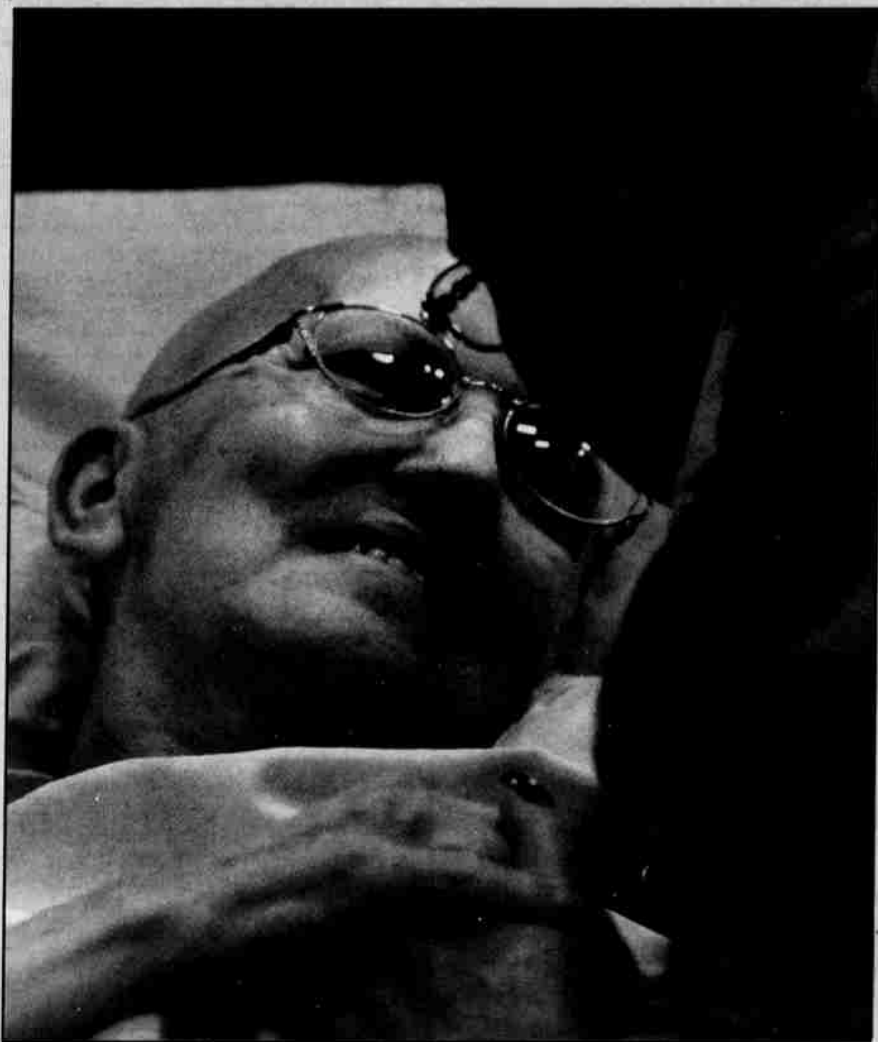


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Lottie Child talks with her niece, Tribal descendant Robin Kisor, during a Celebration of Life held in Child's honor in the Tribal gymnasium on Tuesday, Feb. 15. Child has been battling cancer.

grew up with her and recalled one of their early exploits in Philomath at Beaver Creek.

"We were talking about it today," Hall said, tears drying on her face. "She was laughing so hard. We were fourth- or

fifth-graders and we had missed the bus to go home. We looked around, and there were all these bicycles in racks outside the

See LOTTIE
continued on page 8

Tribal members carving first river canoe seen in Grand Ronde

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, it is all happening in an unassuming steel shed over the rickety wood bridge behind the Tribe's Recovery House on Hebo Road.

A slew of folks from the Cultural Resources Department, as well as knowledgeable volunteers and well-wishers, have been working for the last month on the first river canoe that the Grand Ronde people have built certainly since Restoration and likely since the early 1900s.

In fact, says Tribal member Brian Krehbiel, Cultural Education specialist, in researching the canoe design, "I haven't found any proof of a canoe (like this) being made from Grand Ronde natives since we were marched here in the 1800s."

The 16-foot, three-to-four person, shovel nose cedar canoe sits near another, also in process, almost twice as large and destined for the ocean or for large rivers like the Columbia, according to Krehbiel.

One day last week, he was using a pull blade to shave ribbon after ribbon of beautiful old growth cedar that will, in the next month, leave behind a river canoe sitting on a soft, old growth forest-like floor where there was once just dirt and gravel.

In late March, the canoe will head to the Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill.

The process to take it there began late last year when discussions between Peter Booth, executive director of the Heritage Center,

See CANOE
continued on page 7