

Veterans Powwow set

The 2011 Veterans Powwow will be held Friday through Sunday, July 8-10, at Uyxat Powwow Grounds off Hebo Road near Fort Yamhill State Park. Grand entries will be held on 7 p.m. Friday, 1 and 7 p.m. Saturday, and 1 p.m. Sunday. Master of ceremonies will be Nick Sixkiller and whip man will be Tony Whitehead. All veterans, dancers and members of the public are invited to attend. There will be arts and crafts and food vendors. Free camping and parking will be available, but no drugs, alcohol or pets will be allowed. For more information, contact Veterans Committee member Chris Tinney at 503-883-3610 or chris.tinney@grandronde.org. ■

Helping Hand awards



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Melissa Owens, right, reads a letter from Spirit Mountain Community Fund's Board of Trustees after receiving the Ye?lan Lima Award in front of her co-workers in the association's Portland office on Friday, Feb. 18. Owens is a cancer survivor who started out as a volunteer for the organization, then was offered a staff position. She said she was very honored and kind of speechless after receiving the award.

By Michelle Alaimo

Smoke Signals photographer

Ye?lan Lima is a Chinuk Wawa phrase meaning "helping hand" and Spirit Mountain Community Fund recently established the Ye?lan Lima Award. It will be an annual award given to two people involved with nonprofit organizations located within the 11-county service area covered by the fund. The award's purpose is to recognize individuals with remarkable achievements within organizations. There are two categories for which people can be nominated: unpaid volunteer person and paid non-management staff person. Each of the two award winners receive a distinctive recognition award, a complimentary dinner for two and one night stay at Spirit Mountain Lodge and a \$500 cash gift.

This year's recipients are Patricia Cortez, a volunteer with Juventud FACETA, a youth group in Eugene, for the unpaid volunteer person category, and Melissa Owens, volunteer coordinator and community outreach person for the Children's Cancer Association in Portland for the paid non-management staff person category. The two were presented their awards by Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Shelley Hanson and Program Coordinator Louis King.



Spirit Mountain Community Fund's Program Coordinator Louis King, left, tells Patricia Cortez how to pronounce the name of the Ye?lan Lima Award she was just honored with by the fund at the organization's office in Eugene on Wednesday, Feb. 16. Cortez has been a volunteer with Juventud FACETA since 2002, but she has been a volunteer for its parent organization since 1997. Cortez helps to find mentors for what individual children in the youth group are interested in. She said that her passion is to be of service to young people and she was very surprised and honored to receive the award.

Cultural Trust Board seeks applicants

The Tribal Cultural Trust Board is beginning its 2011 grant-making round. Grants ranging from \$250 to a maximum of \$1,000 are available for Tribal members to use for cultural projects.

The grant-making round opened Feb. 15 and lasts through the end of March.

Interested Tribal members can pick up an application packet at the front desk of the Tribal Governance Center or call Cultural Trust Board Chair Perri McDaniel at 541-484-7085 to have an application packet mailed.

Completed applications must be received by 3 p.m. Thursday, March 31. ■

District votes to close Grand Ronde Middle School

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

It's official: The Willamina School Board voted Feb. 14 to close Grand Ronde Middle School to help pare the district's budget by more than \$1 million for the 2011-12 school year.

The proposal to close Grand Ronde Middle School was part of a package presented by Superintendent Mark Jeffery to keep the district in the black as state funding for schools is expected not to keep up with expenses.

Jeffery's package also included cutting his position as head of the district to a half-time position, which means that in all likelihood he will be seeking work elsewhere.

Other cuts approved by the School Board are to eliminate 16 days from next year's calendar by adopting four-day weeks and eliminating

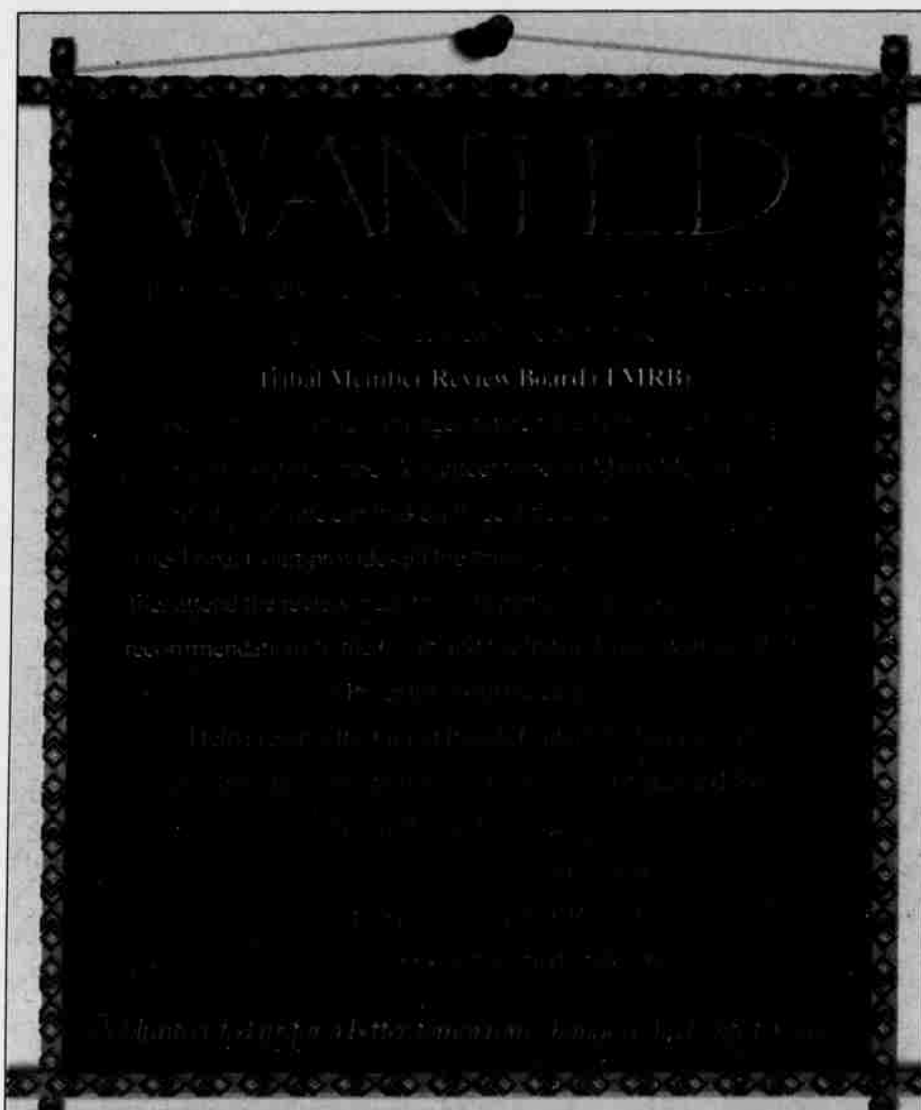
about 15 positions, including approximately six teachers.

Grand Ronde students will be bused to Willamina's Oaken Hill Drive campus, where the elementary school will serve grades kindergarten through sixth and the high school will handle seventh-graders up through seniors.

Next year's school week will run Tuesday through Friday, cutting 16 days from employee contracts and saving the district more than \$1 million.

Jeffery said that cutting the superintendent's job to half-time would save the district another \$65,000, which will save a teaching position.

Jeffery has said that the closure of the Middle School will likely be permanent since the 10-year outlook for state funding of education does not bode well for a significant turnaround. ■



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