

Foundation holding essay contest

The Public Health Foundation is holding an "I'm Your Community Guide" essay contest to increase awareness, adoption and use of the publication by Tribal health organizations.

If someone has used the "Community Guide," they are invited to share their experience by writing a story and submitting it to olivia@phf.org through Friday, June 10.

The top three entrants will receive a scholarship of up to \$1,000 to attend a national public health conference in 2011. The top 15 entrants will win an "I'm Your Community Guide" prize pack.

Submissions may be made as a completed contest entry form or text document of no more than two pages. For more information, visit the "I'm Your Community Contest Guide" contest submission guidelines at www.phf.org. ■

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2011

Changes to Social Services Emergency Assistance and Medical Gas Voucher Program

For all income criteria programs, wage verification for past 60 days (wage stubs) will need to be submitted. If client has not worked for a period of time, client will need to submit a printout from their State Employment Office or printout from Oregon Self Sufficiency Office as verification of income. Rental/deposit or utility assistance may be utilized only one time in a 24-month rolling calendar period and is not to exceed the maximum contribution of \$1,000 per household within any 24-month rolling calendar period.

Medical Gas Vouchers

Social Services will not provide gas vouchers for medical appointments, counseling or drug & alcohol treatment. The only exception to this is for scheduled treatment plans, (i.e.: radiation, chemotherapy, surgery, etc.) and has caused hardship on the family, medical gas vouchers can be distributed to meet the need of the circumstances. A copy of all scheduled treatment plans must be received before client is eligible to receive this service. Assistance will end on the date of the last treatment appointment.

For a complete copy of policy or questions, please contact Tammy C. Garrison at 503-879-2077. ■

Medical field trip



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Mark Johnston, Executive Director of Health Services for the Tribe, tells Linfield College students about the X-ray machine the Tribe has in the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Clinic during their visit on Thursday, May 12. The field trip was part of the "Introduction to Public and Community Health" class and consisted of students from the McMinnville and Portland campuses who are interested in the health care field. One student in the group was Tribal member Amanda Dorman, a freshman who is majoring in pre-med at the college.

Elders' garage sale seeking donations

Tribal Elders are regularly seeking donations of items for their fund-raising garage sales. To donate an item or items, call Tribal Elder Linda Brandon at 971-267-0918. ■

Dakota will not be easily replaced

DAKOTA continued from front page

one."

Tribal Council member Chris Mercier also remembers early morning chats over coffee with Whitecloud.

"I will definitely miss our morning chats," he said.

"When she prepares a report," said Leno, "she is very detailed — an excellent, dig-down-get-all-the-facts-before-you-present-an-issue."

"She had an encyclopedia-like knowledge base of this Tribe, one that probably takes years to amass," said Mercier. "She was valuable for that and will not be easy to replace."

Back in the day, she worked as administrative assistant to Tribal General Manager Jim Willis, who had given her "the dubious honor" of coordinating the move from the Manor Building.

"There were four semi-truck loads," she said. "It took us one week packing up, two days for the move, but unpacking took considerably longer. We were working out of boxes for probably a month."

The move had its moments.

"We had to clean out the attic in the Manor Building," Whitecloud recalled, "and (former Tribal Elder) Jackie Whisler was terrified of bats. We heard a scream. I went in and rescued the bat."

"Leave it to you," Whisler said to Whitecloud, "to rescue a bat."

"I took it home," Whitecloud re-

called, "and turned it loose.

"Back then on a Friday afternoon, it was nothing for (Tribal Elder) Mark Mercier to haul out his barbecue. It was all potlucks in those days and you couldn't believe all the food there was to eat.

"And nobody got paid for being on a committee's staff. After we moved up here, Tribal Council finally agreed to \$3.50 (minimum wage then) payment for their time, if they chose to take it, and not everybody did.

"Then gaming came along. At first, the Tribal Council was dead set against it. They talked about it and talked about it and talked about it.

"Finally Mark Mercier, (who was Tribal Council chairman then), said, 'If you won't let it drop, then let's talk to other Tribes and see what they think of it.'" Along with Kathryn Harrison and Merle Holmes, Mark visited two or three gaming Tribes.

"They came back, had a whole bunch of meetings and decided, 'Yeah, we'll try it.'"

At that time, the Forestry Department was housed where the casino is now located, so Tribal Council went about bringing that land and the land that Natural Resources now occupies into Trust.

Whitecloud was instrumental in bringing in Travis Benoit (Cheyenne River Sioux) to bless the original casino building.

"We (Benoit, Tribal member Randy Butler Jr. and Whitecloud) went completely around and

through the building for the blessing," she said.

"One thing I'll never forget," she said, "is how shocked everybody was when we got the first month's numbers, and the numbers of vehicles visiting the casino. To this day, I drive by and see all those cars. Where do they come from?"

"People were so shocked, it was almost scary.

"They started thinking about expanding some of the programs. One of the first things was to create the endowments. For the Elders security, it started out at \$50 a month. Then, it went up to \$100 a month.

"In 1997, I bought my house and I was thinking, when I'm finally an Elder, I'll be able to have a few more dollars to make my home payment."

A few years later, Elders payments increased to \$500 a month and then to \$1,000, where it is today.

"It still amazes me that we have been able to do so much," she said. "And it's not just the Tribal Council. It's the staff, the Elders. It's everybody."

She remembers the first per capita payments when Tribal members stood out in the cold starting at 6 a.m.

"It was like a celebration, almost," she said.

For the first General Council meeting held at the Community Center, Whitecloud remembers that Tribal Council provided the meat and Tribal Elder Val Grout and her family prepared the rest

of the meal. Everybody brought salads and desserts.

"Everybody was so excited about the room they had."

Whitecloud initiated the door prizes that have been a landmark of General Council meetings ever since. She started it by buying gifts as part of a 50/50 prize, but Kathryn Harrison suggested that instead of gifts, the Tribe should just give out money. And that's the way it has been ever since.

Whitecloud also created the system that allowed Elders to receive their payments by direct deposit.

She has written five ordinances for the Tribe, three of which are still in effect.

"I've written enough policy to fill this office," she said. "It needed to be done. I knew how to do it. I just did it."

"When I first came on council," said Bobb, "I was thinking I knew a little bit of what was going on, but, of course, I was not even close. They said, 'Here's your stuff. Go for it.' Dakota was the only one that helped me out, got me squared away. Every day, she said, 'You need this. You need that for the day.' She's always been a very good, helpful friend."

Leno recalls the way Whitecloud sometimes growls at folks. "I always just think that you growl louder than what she's growling. She's one of the most loyal employees to the Tribe."

"She'll be missed," said Bobb.

Whitecloud's last day of work was Friday, May 27. ■