

Chemeketa opening new McMinnville campus

Facility will aid Tribal members living in Yamhill County earn transfer degrees

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

Chemeketa Community College's new Yamhill Valley campus will almost triple in size this fall as it opens a three-story building on Three Mile Lane in McMinnville across from Willamette Valley Medical Center.

With state-of-the-art science labs, smart classrooms, computer centers, a cafeteria and parking, the new facility replaces the college's former McMinnville campus on Northwest Hill Street.

Last year, about 60 Tribal students attended Chemeketa, said April Campbell, a Tribal member and manager of the Tribal Education Department.

"I think the biggest advantage is that the new facility allows the McMinnville Chemeketa campus to offer more classes," said Campbell. "That will really help our students



Map created by George Valdez

who are living in McMinnville and seeking a transfer to a four-year institution.

"Prior to the new facility, students working toward transfer degrees traveled to the main campus in Salem for some coursework. The new facility and course offerings will give students the ability to earn a transfer degree without leaving McMinnville."

Classes scheduled for Fall 2011 in the new building cover many disciplines, including "Understanding Art," "Human Evolution," "Introduction to Business," "General Biology," "Introduction to Fiction," "Cycling (at all levels)," "History of World Civilization" and "The Psy-



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

The new Chemeketa Community College Yamhill Valley campus in McMinnville will open in time for Fall 2011 classes.

chology of Human Relations."

The new building holds 550, allowing Chemeketa to accommodate as many as 1,600 full- and part-time students in McMinnville every year, the college reported on its Web site.

Fall classes begin Monday, Sept. 26.

Students interested in studying at the Yamhill Valley campus can preview the courses for the coming

semester at www.chemeketa.edu or call 503-472-9482. Classes are filling up quickly, the college advised in August.

Chemeketa also has facilities in Salem, Brooks, Dallas, Eola and Woodburn, and offers training for public safety, business and viticulture professionals.

The Grand Ronde Tribe also offers classes at the Tribal campus through Chemeketa Community College. ■

Table Rocks MOU signing set for Sept. 10

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

The Bureau of Land Management, Nature Conservancy and Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Saturday, Sept. 10, agreeing to cooperate in an emerging management plan for Table Rocks.

Sept. 10 also is the 158th anniversary of the Tribe's Table Rock Treaty, the first treaty negotiated and the second ratified in western Oregon of seven that the Grand Ronde Tribe's forebears ultimately signed with the federal government.

"This is a landmark event for the Tribe," said Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor. "On Sept. 10, 1853, the ancestors of the Grand Ronde people signed a treaty with the government. That treaty ceded the Tribe's traditional lands in exchange for being force-marched to a land reserve in Grand Ronde.

"Everyone knows those Tribal leaders had no other choice in order to save their families. This Sept. 10, 2011, the Tribe comes to Table Rocks as a sovereign government. This Sept. 10 we are signing a Memorandum of Understanding. The federal government, the Bureau of Land Management, is seeking the Tribe's involvement in improved environmental and cultural stewardship of the land.

"This Sept. 10, we are at the table as equals, as a sovereign nation bringing our knowledge, history and culture back to our ceded lands at Table Rocks."

"It reinvigorates our stake in southern Oregon," said Tribal member and Cultural Resources Department Manager David Lewis.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has "a long history of involvement in the area," said Mark Stern, director of Klamath Conservation Area, Southwest Oregon

and Klamath Basin for The Nature Conservancy. "The Tribe has ancient knowledge, a connection with the land and an interest in protecting the site. We're looking forward to working with our partners."

Tribal Elder Jolanda Catabay will sing the national anthem at the event. Her relations in the area include her great-great-grandmother, Indian Mary, and Indian Mary's father, Umpqua Jo, chief of the Grave Creek Band of Umpquas, who were members of the Takelma Tribe in those days.

Umpqua Jo signed the two Rogue River treaties for what became the Grand Ronde Tribe. He also signed the 1854 amendment to the 1853 Treaty as Aps-so-ka-hah, horse-rider, or Jo.

Takelmas inhabited the Table Rocks area for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. In the 1850s, the group was given land in the area that Catabay says was, for a time, "the smallest reservation in the nation." The Takelmas ultimately merged with other Rogue River Indians under the treaty.

"It's important to reacquire ourselves with the area," said Tribal member John Mercier, who also is Tribal Director of Program Operations and Tribal lead for the management plan, "and be able to participate in the management of that area.

"My hopes personally, and I think it's a reflection of what the Tribe hopes, is to be able to visit the area regularly, keep the Table Rocks area healthy and see it prosper as a natural landscape."

This culturally significant place, north of Medford, is also where the Tribe's Trail of Tears began. Many of today's Tribal Elders and members have direct ancestors who made that forced march from Table Rocks

to Grand Ronde in early 1856.

Today, the federal bureau, with responsibility for 1,280 acres of the Upper and Lower Table Rocks area, is working with The Nature Conservancy, which has acquired 2,789 acres in the area since 1978 and has a conservation easement on another 795 acres.

Together, as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding, the bureau, Nature Conservancy and Grand Ronde Tribe will "consider a variety of habitat enhancement activities, protect sensitive resources and provide a suite of diverse recreational and environmental education uses," according to a BLM Web page.

Based on a federal commitment to consult with Tribes on issues of mutual importance and because the Upper and Lower Table Rocks are located in the Grand Ronde Tribe's ceded lands, the federal bureau and Nature Conservancy will agree in the memorandum to work with the Tribe on the management plan.

The memorandum addresses a number of issues:

- Establish a Table Rocks management committee;
- Develop the management plan that integrates protection, management and restoration of unique plants and animals; as well as honoring geologic, cultural and scenic values for recreation and education;
- Pursue land acquisition of lands adjacent to the nearly 5,000 acres owned or managed by BLM and the Nature Conservancy;
- Explore opportunities for ceremonial hunting for the Grand Ronde people on the BLM-administered lands;
- Develop educational and interpretive signage that describes a historical and spiritual connection;
- And encourage Tribal fire man-

agement in the area with Grand Ronde wildland firefighters taking the lead in using fire as it traditionally was used to maintain the land.

Participants are also supportive of Tribal plant gathering and propagation, according to Trish Lindaman, Recreation planner and project lead for the Bureau of Land Management.

In fact, says Lewis, the Cultural Site Protection program has begun work to help develop the former Fort Lane site, across the river from Lower Table Rock, as a state park.

The management plan is now being developed and will go out for public comment in the September-October time period, Lindaman said.

The memorandum specifies a five-year time period, when the parties can take "a second look," before renewing it.

BLM-administered lands on both Table Rocks were designated an Area of Critical Concern in 1986, said Lindaman, but a management plan was never completed.

Attending the signing, set to take place at Lower Table Rock Trail Head, is by invitation from the three partners and open to the media.

The Tribe created a task force to represent the Tribe for development of the memo. Members are John Mercier, Tribal Attorney Rob Greene, Staff Attorney Lisa Bluelake, who drafted the memorandum, Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor, Publications photographer Michelle Alaimo, Tribal member and Public Affairs Administrative Assistant Kristin Ravia, David Lewis, Tribal member and Cultural Collections Coordinator Khani Schultz and Tribal member and Realty Specialist Ann Lewis, who lived in the area. ■