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Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Event highlights youth activities addition

By Ron Karten

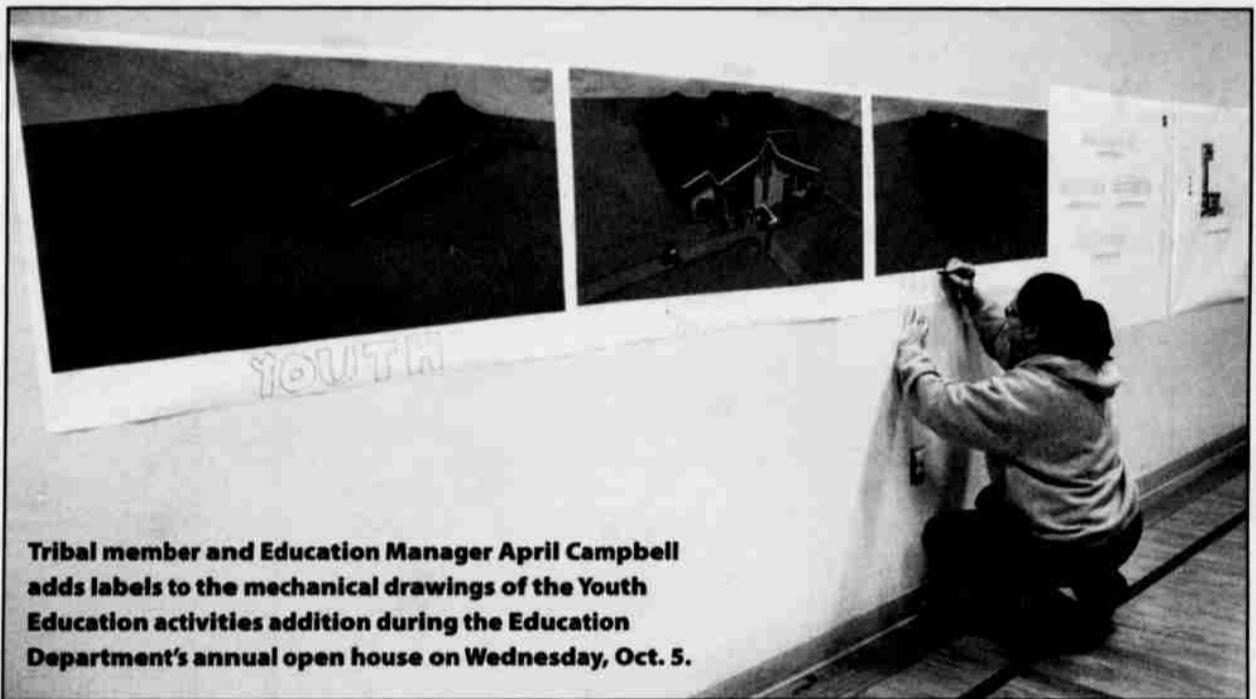
Smoke Signals staff writer

Recently approved grants are building a new youth activities addition at the Tribal Education Department, as well as furnishing and staffing it, while a third grant provides money for a kindergarten Chinuk wawa language immersion class.

The Education Department held its annual open house on Wednesday, Oct. 5, at the Tribal gymnasium. More than 50 members of staff and community attended. The activities addition was the main focus of the evening as many toured the new facility, which is currently in the middle of construction.

The building is expected to be finished in December, and Education Department Manager April Campbell, a member of the Tribe, said that work is currently on schedule.

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Tribal member and Education Manager April Campbell adds labels to the mechanical drawings of the Youth Education activities addition during the Education Department's annual open house on Wednesday, Oct. 5.

Photo by Ron Karten

Tribal Elder Ellen Fischer named to Chemawa School Board

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

Tribal Elder Ellen Fischer, an employee at Chemawa Indian School in Salem for 27 years before her retirement in 2009, has been appointed to the Chemawa School Board.

"As a former employee," said John Claymore, Northwest Education Line Officer for the federal Bureau of Indian Education, "she was kind of a natural fit. She knows what's going on at the school, and she has always been a real professional."

Claymore oversees nine other Indian schools in the Northwest and is acting school supervisor at Chemawa.

"I loved it there," said Fischer. "I liked the people that worked there. And you learned a lot from the students. I enjoyed that."

Fischer applied for the position during the summer and was notified of the good news by Claymore on Sept. 14. She was sworn in to the three-year position on Sept. 22 at the first board meeting of the new school year.

Chemawa serves about 400 students a year, and board members are selected from reservations where the largest proportion of students live. Forty of Chemawa's students this year are from Oregon.

Fischer will work with four other board members, including one from Alaska, two from Arizona and a still-to-be-named board member from South Dakota, reflecting the



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Ellen Fischer has been appointed to the Chemawa Indian School Board. She was an employee of the Salem school for 27 years, before retiring in 2009.

home states of many students attending Chemawa this year.

Fischer remained friends with many students after they graduated and went on with their lives, she said. "They would call me, introduce me to family members. It was always nice to keep in contact."

"She is real dedicated and committed," said Claymore. "I remember one incident when there was a real bad storm, trees across the road; people from the immediate area could not make it in, but Ellen

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NCAI coming to Portland between Oct. 30-Nov. 4

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

The 68th annual Convention and Marketplace of the National Congress of American Indians will meet at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland in the ceded homelands of the Grand Ronde Tribe between Sunday, Oct. 30, and Friday, Nov. 4.

The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, host of this NCAI event called "Footprints Into the Future," has received funding from Oregon's federally recognized Tribes to help underwrite

the event.

Grand Ronde Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy served on the local planning committee to bring appropriate local culture into the event.

Among the cultural plans for the week, ATNI has invited the Grand Ronde Canoe Family to open the event. The Canoe Family will paddle the Willamette River to arrive at "The Bowl" area of the Portland waterfront on Southwest Naito Parkway at

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FIGHTING FOR THE FEATHER

Grand Ronde helps Troutdale student get permission to graduate with eagle feather

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

TROUTDALE—Tonie Driver and her daughter, Mykilee, members of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes who live in east Multnomah County, took on Reynolds High School and, with the help of a Grand Ronde Tribal member, have become champions for ensuring that Tribal cultural

practices flourish in high schools across Oregon.

Driver and her daughter fought a school practice that has prevented Native students from wearing an eagle feather on their graduation caps.

"I waited 18 years (to see my

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