Tribal police force on its way — pg. 4

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FEBRUARY 1, 2012

Smoke Signals

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

www.grandronde.org

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Tribal Council sends primary idea to voters

Constitutional amendment would change the way Tribe conducts annual elections

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council voted 6-1 on Wednesday, Jan. 25, to send a proposed constitutional amendment to voters that would create a primary during the Tribal election process if more than 10 candidates are nominated in any given year.

Only first-term Tribal Council member Toby McClary voted against the resolution and Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker was absent.

During the September 2010 election, a non-binding survey asked Tribal members about a possible Tribal Council primary and about establishing Tribal Council term limits.

Tribal members who responded to the survey supported a primary 582-366, or 61.4 percent in favor of the idea. To change the Tribal Constitution, two-thirds of Tribal voters casting ballots must approve a proposed amendment.

In the 2010 survey, almost 47 percent of those responding said they favored paring the Tribal Council candidate slate to six for the early September general election.

The proposed constitutional amendment would create a primary if the number of candidates nominated to run for Tribal Council in late June exceeds 10. The top six candidates in the primary election would continue on to the September general election.

Tribal Council elections of late have regularly seen a candidate field exceeding 10 with those being elected regularly receiving less than 20

See PRIMARY continued on page 6

Fourth time a charm

Senior Miss Grand Ronde Nakoosa Moreland participates in the junior and teen girls jingle dress exhibition dance during the fourth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow at the Oregon State Fair & Expo Center Pavilion in Salem on Saturday, Jan. 28. *Story and more photos on pages 8-9.*

Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Reservation Act amendment to receive hearing

Grand Ronde 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 will receive a hearing before the Senate Indian Affairs Committee on Thursday, Feb. 2.

A Grand Ronde contingent, led by Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A.

See AMENDMENT continued on page 13

Want to watch?

The Webcast of the hearing on the proposed amendment to the Grand Ronde Reservation Act can be watched at 11:15 a.m. Pacific time on Thursday, Feb. 2, by going to http://indian.senate.gov/news/multimedia.cfm.

Mercier receives Leadership Award

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

DAYTON — Tribal Council member Chris Mercier received the Gwen VanDenBosch Regional Leadership Award on Wednesday, Jan. 25, at the annual meeting of the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments held at the Dayton Community Center.

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Tribal Council member Chris Mercier and Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor look at the plaque that Mercier received after being named the recipient of the Gwen VanDenBosch Regional Leadership Award at the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments annual dinner and awards presentation at the Dayton Community Center in Dayton on Wednesday, Jan. 25. On the left, Mercier's mother, Pat, and brother, Tribal member Bryan Mercier, also attended the event.

Photo by Michelle Alaimo