

## Cultural Trust Board slates cleanup days

The Tribe's Cultural Trust Board is sponsoring Cultural Area cleanup days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 22 and 29.

The Trust Board will provide lunch and refreshments to those who help.

Some of the work that needs to be done includes rebuilding the sweat lodge, putting up a clothes line to dry the blankets when people are finished with sweats, repairing the wood storage shed, chopping wood for winter storage, clearing overgrown blackberries and Scotch broom, and more.

If you are interested in sweats, join in and help with the work that needs to be done.

"Everyone is invited and welcome to come and help take care of our sacred sweat lodge area in a good way," said Cultural Trust Board Chair Perry McDaniel.

For more information, contact McDaniel at [ctgrwi@hotmail.com](mailto:ctgrwi@hotmail.com). ■

## Fire Protection Program seeks applicants

Applications for Chemeketa Community College's Fire Protection Program are being accepted. Deadline to apply is 4:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 14.



Students who complete the Fire Suppression I and EMT Paramedic programs will earn dual associate degrees in Fire Suppression Technology and Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic.

The Tribe's Associate Vocational Program will provide funding toward tuition, fees, books and supplies for eligible students.

The Fire/Paramedic program is a three-year commitment during which students receive on-the-job training. Prerequisite requirements are:

- Placement in WR121 or completion of WR114 or equivalent;
- Placement in MTH70 or completion of MTH 60 or equivalent;
- Placement in RD115 or completion of RD90 or equivalent.

Classes begin Monday, Jan. 7, 2013.

For more information, visit the Chemeketa Web site at [www.chemeketa.edu/programs/fireprotection](http://www.chemeketa.edu/programs/fireprotection) or contact Joshua Clift at [Joshua.clift@grandronde.org](mailto:Joshua.clift@grandronde.org) or call 800-422-0232, ext. 1635. ■

## PUBLIC NOTICE OPEN FOR COMMENT

This is a Public Notice for Comment on the Grand Ronde Tribe's application for 2013 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Funding. The Grand Ronde Tribe obtained a LIHEAP grant last year from the Division of Energy Assistance within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This grant program assists income eligible Tribal members with energy assistance (utility bills, fire wood, etc.), crisis energy assistance and weatherization (e.g. furnace repair, caulking, insulation).

The Tribe's LIHEAP service area includes Polk, Yamhill, Marion, Multnomah, Washington, Tillamook and Clackamas counties. If you are interested in obtaining services from the current program, contact Social Services at 800-242-8196 for energy assistance and the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority at 503-879-2405 for weatherization.

The Tribe is taking public comment on the 2013 LIHEAP application and plan, which are to be submitted by Sept. 4, 2012. The latest draft will be available for review at the Planning & Grants Development Department at the Tribal Governance Center starting Aug. 17, 2012. You may also call Planning & Grants Development at 503-879-2250 with your comments on the plan or to obtain more information about the plan. ■

## Social Services 2012 School Clothes Program

This is a first-come, first-served program.

Child must be an enrolled Grand Ronde Tribal member.

Child must be of school age and enrolled in school (preschool, elementary, middle or high school).

Income criteria applies.

Please contact Social Services at 800-242-8196 or 503-879-2034 for application.

Deadline for all applications is Friday, Sept. 14. ■

## Zumba held Monday, Wednesday in Grand Ronde

Zumba, a Latin-inspired and calorie-burning dance fitness party, is held from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday in the old Grand Ronde Middle School.

The first class is free and \$6 thereafter for drop-ins, or \$5 if participants purchase a punch card.

For more information, contact Tribal Recreation Coordinator Matthew Mosely at 503-879-1369 or [matthew.mosely@grandronde.org](mailto:matthew.mosely@grandronde.org). ■

## In 2011 1,315 adult members did not register

### VOTERS continued from front page

members do not register to vote. In 2011, for instance, there were 3,844 Tribal members eligible to vote, but only 2,529 ballots were mailed, meaning 1,315 adult Tribal members — 34.2 percent — did not register.

A *Smoke Signals* analysis of Tribal voting trends between 2003 and 2011, which includes nine Tribal Council elections, finds that Tribal voters during the last three years have been increasingly disinterested in voting.

Turnout of eligible voters averaged 37 percent during the six Tribal Council elections held between 2003 and 2008. Between 2009 and 2011, turnout decreased to an average of 30.9 percent — a 6.1 percent drop — for the three most recent Tribal Council elections.

The decline in Tribal voter participation coincided with the recession in the U.S. economy, which forced the Tribe to tighten its budgetary belt as Spirit Mountain Casino rev-

enues leveled off for the first time in its history.

Bad economic times might have affected Tribal member interest in Tribal elections as concerns about paying the mortgage, keeping or getting a job and putting food on the table trumped other concerns.

The largest number of Tribal members to cast ballots occurred in 2008 when 1,349 voted. Two years later in 2010, only 1,095 Tribal members — the lowest number recorded in the nine-year span — participated.

The reasons why, however, remain elusive and speculative at best.

Tribal Council member Chris Mercier said he thinks there are three major factors affecting Tribal voter turnout.

"Proximity, in that I think the closer you are to the Tribe the more likely you are to vote," Mercier said. "Plus, it is an annual election, which might create burnout. It's just another layer of elections, including federal, state, county and city, that people have to worry about."

A breakdown of the 2009 election performed by the Tribal Elections Board appears to support Mercier's contention. Oregon eligible Tribal members voted at a 35.7 percent rate while 28.9 percent of those living in California voted and Tribal members in Washington state had a 19.8 percent participation rate. Those are the only three states with more than 100 Tribal members living in them.

Another factor, Mercier said, is that there are not as many "hot button" issues in Tribal politics that drive people to the polls like there are in other national and state elections where controversial wedge issues, such as gay marriage or abortion, can light a spark under casual voters.

Part of the problem also appears to be disinterest by new eligible voters — those turning 18. In 2003, 3,206 adult Tribal members were eligible to vote. By 2011, that number had grown 638 to 3,844 adult Tribal members, and by not voting many of those new eligible voters negatively affected turnout.

Although Tribal turnout has seen

significant percentage declines from 2003 to 2011, last year's results offered a glimmer of hope for the Tribe's future as turnout increased from 2010's low of 29 percent to 32.9 percent, an almost 4 percent jump in one year.

The increase, perhaps, reflects the slowly improving economy nationally.

But even in the best year among the nine-year sample — 2004 when 40.7 percent of eligible Tribal voters cast ballots — almost six in 10 adult Tribal members did not cast a ballot in a Tribal Council election.

Tribal voting turnout mirrors national trends.

In the 1960 presidential election, 63.1 percent of Americans voted and 47.3 percent went to the polls in the 1962 off-year election. Fast-forward to the 2008 presidential election when 56.8 percent of Americans voted and 37.8 percent voted in the 2010 off-year election.

One truth is apparent in both national and Tribal elections: Fewer people are picking the people to lead the country and the Tribe. ■