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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Fifth First Nations Powwow set for Jan. 26

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

SALEM — Four of western Oregon's five federally recognized Tribes will come together once again to host the fifth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Salem Pavilion on the Oregon State Fairgrounds.

The theme will be health, said Siobhan Taylor, Public Affairs director for the Grand Ronde Tribe, who is organizing the event. "Diabetes, exercise, healthy eating will all be on the agenda."

The four sponsoring western Tribes are the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, Coquille Indian Tribe, Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians

and Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians decided not to participate in this year's powwow.

The four eastern Oregon Tribes — Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reserva-

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Grand Ronde Royalty Princess Elizabeth Watson-Croy performs a traditional dance during the fourth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow at the Oregon State Fair & Expo Center Pavilion in Salem in January 2012.



Smoke Signals file photo



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

The new electric car charging station at Grand Ronde Station is now open for use.

Plugged in

New electric car charging station opens at Grand Ronde Station

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Grand Ronde Tribe has joined the West Coast Electric Highway.

On April 18, the Grand Ronde Tribal Council set the stage for two electric charging stations to be installed at the Tribal convenience store along heavily traveled Highway 18.

On Nov. 27, the two charging stations came online and in the

month since the stations have been serving daily customers, said store manager Opal Hale.

The Tribe is planning a grand opening/ribbon cutting ceremony at the store for late February or early March, said Jilene Mercier, Senior Administrative Assistant in the Economic Development Department and the Tribe's point person on the project.

"This project brings economic diversification to the Tribe with

no upfront costs since it was funded by an ODOT TIGER grant," said Tribal Economic Development Director Titu Asghar.

"The Tribe is very excited about the recent opening of the electrical vehicle charging station at the C-store and being part of this green initiative

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Spirit Mountain Community Fund surpasses \$58 million in giving

Tribe awards \$640,656.40 to 33 nonprofits on Dec. 12

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

As part of the Grand Ronde Tribe's latest effort to improve the quality of life in Oregon consistent with its values, Spirit Mountain Community Fund distributed more than \$640,000 to 33 Oregon nonprofits on Wednesday, Dec. 12.

Since its inception in 1997, the Community Fund has donated more than \$58.3 million to nonprofits in an 11-county area in western Oregon and to Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes as part of its gaming compact with the state.

The grants fund projects in the areas of education, health, arts and culture, environment, historic preservation and public safety.

This quarter's recipients included Dallas-based Farmers Ending Hunger, a 7-year-old nonprofit that solicits food or in-kind donations that go to the Oregon Food Bank and the Polk-Marion Food Share, said Executive Director John Burt.

He said that he hopes the \$15,000 Community Fund grant will enable the group to increase donations by \$1 million from the \$1.8 million to \$2 million the group has collected in recent years.

This was the second Community Fund grant awarded to the group.

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