

# Council members return to D.C.

By Dean Rhodes

*Smoke Signals editor*

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno and Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr. are returning to Washington, D.C., to testify before the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs on Thursday, May 16, in support of H.R. 841, the proposed Grand Ronde Reservation Act amendment.

The legislation, which was introduced in the House of Representatives by Oregon Rep. Kurt Schrader on Feb. 26, would end the current two-step process requiring that the Grand Ronde Tribe take each piece of former reservation land into trust with approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and then request that the land be designated reservation land by Congress.

As in the past, the legislation has the bipartisan support of the entire Oregon congressional delegation, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Polk and Yamhill counties.

The amendment would allow the Tribe to combine the two-step process for real property that is within the boundaries of its original reservation established in 1857.

"All applications to take land into trust within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation shall be treated by the Secretary (of the Interior) as an on-reservation trust acquisition," H.R. 841 states.

The legislation also says that all real property taken into trust within the boundaries of the original reservation after Sept. 9, 1988, will be considered part of the Tribe's reservation.

A companion bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate on Feb. 28 by Oregon Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden.



Reyn Leno



Jack Giffen Jr.

Tribal Council members testified before Congress in 2012 about the legislation. Then-Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in February while then-Vice Chair Leno testified before the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs in July.

However, the committees that controlled the legislation failed to vote on either version, which was the fate of much legislation in the last Congress.

"The Tribe is hampered in its efforts to restore land within its original reservation by a lengthy and cumbersome Bureau of Indian Affairs process," Leno said in his July 2012 testimony. "Because the

Tribe does not have exterior reservation boundaries, all parcels are processed under the more rigorous off-reservation acquisition regulations – even if the parcel is located within the boundaries of the original reservation.

"After the land is accepted into trust, the Tribe must take an additional step of amending its Reservation Act through federal legislation to include the trust parcels in order for the land to be deemed reservation land.

"This process is unduly time-consuming, expensive, bureaucratic and often takes years to complete."

In July 2012, Siletz Tribal Chairwoman Delores Pigsley and Robert Garcia, chair of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, testified that they support the Grand Ronde Reservation Act legislation.

Tribal Attorney Rob Greene also is attending the hearing, as well. ■

# Rose Festival princesses visit Tribe

By Ron Karten

*Smoke Signals staff writer*

Fourteen of the 15 Rose Festival princesses visited the Elders' Activity Center and the Tribal plankhouse on Friday, May 10, as part of the Rose Festival Court's outreach efforts.

It was one of some 120 visits over 27 days for the princesses, said Rose Festival Court scheduler Randi Black.

Before the Rose Festival starts, the Court will have visited hospital patients, assisted living facilities and elementary schools where they read to children, as well as conducted gift exchanges with royalty from the Pendleton Roundup and many other organizations. They served Meals on Wheels and packed boxes for the Sunshine Division of the Portland Police Department.

"The idea is to take the Rose Festival to people that might not get to attend," Black said.

After welcomes and good wishes from Tribal Royalty princesses Madison Ross and Amelia Mooney, accompanied by acting princess and friend Kylie Gonzales, the Rose Festival Court was welcomed by Tribal Council Chair Reyn Leno and Tribal Council members Jon A. George and Steve Bobb Sr. Then Elders – including Kathryn Harrison, Margaret Provost, Gladys Hobbs, Violet Folden, Betty Bly, Val Grout, Bud White, Linda Brandon and Jack Lash – told the princesses stories and episodes from their Tribal and personal histories.

Grand Ronde Royalty princesses presented their Rose Festival counterparts with roses made out of cedar bark. George explained the value of cedar to Tribal peoples and the many uses it serves. Mooney showed the group a few powwow dance steps.



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

At the request of the Rose Festival Court, Grand Ronde Junior Princess Amelia Mooney demonstrated powwow dances for the 2013 Rose Festival Court princesses during their visit to the Elders' Activity Center on Friday, May 10.



Rose Festival Court Princess Megan Ten Berge, of Lake Oswego High School, signs the Elders' Activity Center guest book during the court's visit on Friday, May 10. Waiting to also sign the book are fellow princesses Sim Kaur, left, of St. Mary's High School and Ajeya Woods of Lincoln High School.

temperature outside was in the 70s, Krehbiel had built a fire inside.

"The smoke carries our words up to where they have to go," he said.

"I love talking to anyone older

than me, learning their stories and histories is what I love to do," said Rhona Teeny of Central Catholic High School. "There's a lot more than meets the eye."

"It's been an amazing experience,"

said Shani Plunkett-de la Cruz of Roosevelt High School. "You find out how people lived and the kind of advice they have to offer."

Rose Festival princesses also presented themselves and their roles in a little play, where all spoke in unison about the festival and then individuals told a little about themselves.

The Tribe's Spirit Mountain Casino is in its third year of a three-year commitment as title sponsor of the Grand Floral Parade.

"That was really heartwarming," said Princess Alejandra Martinez of Franklin High School about the Tribal presentations. "It makes me want to come back." ■