

Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Affordable Care Act will help Tribe pare health care expenses

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The federal Affordable Care Act, which started Oct. 1 when Americans without health insurance coverage nationwide were given the opportunity to start buying policies on state- or federally-run Internet exchanges, will potentially help the Grand Ronde Tribe in its efforts to curtail health care expenses for its membership.

Tribal Health & Wellness Department employees Amber Yates and Loretta Meneley briefed Tribal members on the act, colloquially known as Obamacare, at the Oct. 6 General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center.

The act, which was passed several years ago by Congress, signed

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Pumpkin pickin' fun



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Gibson Mercier rolls the pumpkin he chose through Heiser Farms' pumpkin patch during Youth Education's annual trip to the Dayton farm on Friday, Oct. 11. A group of about 100 students, staff and parents from Grand Ronde visited the farm where the children went through the petting zoo, played games and took a hayride to the pumpkin patch to pick a pumpkin to take home with them. See more photos on page 13.

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Adam Leno walks in his grandfather's shoes



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

Adam Leno feels like he was meant to take care of the Tribal cemetery. Before him, for close to 30 years, his grandfather, Russell Leno, was cemetery caretaker. He walked on in 2010.

"I worked with grandpa down here since I was 8 years old," Adam says. His grandfather raised him since fifth grade. "I'd come up here to help him; sometimes to work off the trouble I got in. It was a pretty big part of my life."

Adam, 33, not only was raised taking care of the cemetery, he

also has chosen work at the Tribe that played a part in his choice of cemetery caretaker.

Starting with the Natural Resources Department's Youth Crew when he was a teenager, Adam was out in the woods building trails and fighting fires. He worked as part of the Tribe's housekeeping and groundskeeping departments as well.

"I think he liked to watch me mow the grass," Adam says of his grandfather. "Sometimes, I sharpened

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Adam Leno is currently caretaker of the Tribal Cemetery. He is following in his grandfather Russell Leno's footsteps, who cared for the cemetery for almost 30 years before he walked on in 2010.

Tribe hires planning, TERO directors

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

The Tribe's Planning director and Tribal Employment Rights Office director positions have been filled.

Rick George, 55, has been named the Tribe's first Planning director. It will be a coordinating position that melds the planning now occurring in individual departments.

"They're the experts," George says of the planners in other departments.

Position details are being developed by General Manager Mark Johnston and Assistant General Manager Chris Leno, and will eventually receive approval from Tribal Council.

Until approval, George is getting to know the people and programs of the Tribe.

The Tribe's 2010 Strategic Plan is the blue-

print for planning work, George said.

"I've become very familiar with that plan. My job is to help Tribal departments build initiatives tied to the plan," he said. "These initiatives go through a considered process of deciding priorities, staying within budget, producing

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