

## Volunteers wanted

The Tina Miller Community Center Thrift Store, 110 B. St., Willamina, helps fund the after-school and weekend youth community center located in the old Willamina High School gym.

The thrift store is seeking volunteers who can help run the store, in addition to donated items and customers. The store accepts clothes, books, knickknacks, etc., as donations. It is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and closed Sunday and Monday.

Donations also can be left at the Wildwood Hotel and Restaurant in Willamina. For more information on volunteering, call 503-876-7897.

The youth center and thrift store are nonprofit and 100 percent self-sustaining and volunteer-run. ■

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# TERO is about Indian preference

EMPLOYEES continued  
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outcomes desired and deciding who is responsible for getting that work done. The Tribe is a multi-faceted, complex organization that requires some planning focus. It requires coordination around common goals and objectives."

George did similar work for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation for 21 years from 1989-2010. He was program manager of environmental planning and treaty rights protection.

"If you look about how the Tribe goes about its work, much of it is to protect, expand, exercise and restore the rights derived from treaties, executive orders and restoration acts; all of the things that define the rights of Tribes and Tribal peoples," he said.

At Umatilla, George oversaw \$100 million in congressional appropriations to pay for a stream flow restoration project. It restored three stocks of salmon and allowed the Tribe to exercise its Tribal fishing rights after 80 years of not fishing.

George also wrote strategic plans that allowed the Umatilla to enter formal legal negotiations to settle their Tribal water rights – in-stream water rights and consumptive use – for the whole Umatilla River Basin.

In 1986, he co-founded and was the first executive director of the Oregon Rivers Council.

"That was a learning experience for me," he said. "I got to know all of Oregon's rivers, and in the best way by floating them and hiking them

with people who know them best. It led to a 40-river federal omnibus wild and scenic rivers bill passed by Congress in 1988."

Starting in 2010, George served as a vice president and first executive director for Portland-based EcoTrust, a for-profit and not-for-profit organization serving Portland primarily, but also with a small office in Alaska. EcoTrust operates in Alaska, British Columbia, Yukon Territories and across the Pacific Northwest.

The staff of 100 and a \$10 million budget enable the 20-year-old group to do much of its work with Tribes, First Nations and Alaska Natives in that region.

George was raised in La Grande and has lived all his life in the Northwest. He attended Lewis & Clark College where he majored in biology. He is married to Kathleen George, the Tribe's Spirit Mountain Community Fund director. Together, they have three children: Dylan, 21, Noah, 9, and Sean, 6.

"We love to fish and hunt and raft rivers. We live on a small five-acre plot that has a great deal of potential yet to be realized," he said.

Greg Azure, 63, was hired this month and is the first TERO director for the Tribe. He joins the Tribe to implement the TERO ordinance now being considered by Tribal Council. It will launch a new Tribal program aimed at creating more jobs suited to Tribal members.

The ordinance creates a five-member TERO Commission as the enforcing regulatory body. As TERO director, Azure will report to the commission. Recruitment for commission members begins once



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

**Rick George has been named the Tribe's new planning director.**

the ordinance is approved.

"A TERO ordinance defines who is eligible, how preference is applied, the jurisdiction of the preference and how it is enforced," Azure said.

The Employment Rights Office will aim to reduce joblessness for Tribal members looking for work and for those already working but looking to make a change.

"TERO is about Indian preference, Tribal preference," he said.

TERO promotes Tribal self-governance and shows Tribal sovereignty in action.

To meet employment goals, the program will identify and define jobs so they are suited for Tribal members.

"I'm working with businesses to define positions in a way that helps Tribal members meet qualifications and requirements for these positions," Azure said.

In support of this goal, the program also offers mentoring, on-the-job training and job shadows.

It will develop a picture of what the Tribal workforce currently looks like and make projections about future employment, Azure said.

Having worked with Tribal TERO programs starting 20 years ago, Azure says that TEROs have had an overwhelmingly positive effect on Tribal hiring.

The program applies preferences to all Tribal positions as well as employment at all of the Tribe's businesses and contractors working in the Tribal community.

TERO also will certify contracting firms owned by Tribal members

for participation on Tribal construction projects.

As the result of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Oregon Department of Transportation, TERO preferences also will apply to that department's work in the Tribal community.

"Tribal governments have become more stable and have additional financial resources," Azure said, but even with that support and Tribal funds established for employment, jobs for Tribal members continue to lag.

For the moment, Azure is the program's only employee, but "we will be adding staff as we launch the program," he said.

Azure comes from a human resources background, including four years leading the TERO program for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. In 2006, under his leadership, the Umatilla program was recognized as the national TERO Program of the Year from among more than 300 TERO programs operating in Indian Country.

Most recently, he was the Employee Civil Rights and Diversity manager at ODOT for more than five years.

Azure is a member of the Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska. He was born and raised in the Northwest, and attended Eastern Washington University.

He comes from a family of eight children and now lives in Willamina with his wife, Carol. He also has two daughters and three grandchildren. ■



**Greg Azure has been hired as the Tribe's first Tribal Employment Rights Office director.**