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Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

A salmon nation

2nd annual event fetes traditional Tribal mainstay

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Tribe's traditional meal honoring the return of the first salmon to the Reservation was served to more than 50 Tribal members, dignitaries and staff at the Community Center on Friday, Dec. 12.

It was the second year in a row that the Tribe had held a Salmon Celebration to honor the food mainstay that helped keep Native Americans fed in the Pacific Northwest since time immemorial.

Grand Ronde drummers – Jan Looking Wolf Reibach, Leslie Riggs, Bobby Mercier, Jordan Mercier, Brian Krehbiel and David Harrelson – opened the celebration.

The Lilu preschool class sang with small voices and big hearts in Chinuk Wawa, the Tribe's traditional language.

Tribal Council member Cheryle A. Kennedy gave the invocation and Chair Reyn Leno welcomed the crowd.

"Seeing the kids singing today, I know that one day it will be a traditional thing that they do," Leno

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Photos by Michelle Alaimo



Drew Mahalic, left, chief executive officer of Oregon Sports Authority, is gifted a piece of salmon from Senior Miss Grand Ronde Goldie Bly during the Salmon Celebration held at the Tribal Community Center on Thursday, Dec. 12. On the right is Lesley Bennett, director of finance for Willamette Partnership, who also received salmon.

From left, Leslie Riggs, Tribal 477 Employment & Training supervisor; Jordan Mercier, Tribal compliance technician; David Harrelson, Tribal Cultural Protection specialist; and Bobby Mercier, Tribal Cultural Outreach specialist, sing a blessing song during the celebration.

Visit the Tribe's facebook page to see more photos

Tribal interests aired at Tribal-state summit

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

SALEM — At this year's Tribal-State Government-to-Government Summit held Monday, Dec. 2, held at the Salem Convention Center, the Grand Ronde Tribe commanded a significant number of leadership posts.

Among six clusters – areas of mutual interest between Tribes and state government – Grand Ronde

Tribal Council members led two and the Tribe's former Education Department manager led one of those on the state side.

Breakout sessions in the morning enabled Tribes and government leaders to discuss mutually important issues in a public setting.

Lunch was a networking oppor-

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Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Clockwise from left, Tribal Council member Denise Harvey, April Campbell, Indian Education specialist for Oregon's Department of Education and a Grand Ronde Tribal member, Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary and Tribal Attorney Rob Greene talk during a networking lunch at the Tribal-State Government-to-Government Summit held at the Salem Convention Center in Salem on Monday, Dec. 2. The lunch was followed by an education roundtable discussion.