

General Council briefed on police department

Tribal officers made 150 arrests in 2013

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

In its first full year of existence, the Grand Ronde Police Department arrested 150 people, handled 333 cases and seized almost \$7,000 worth of illicit drugs, said Tribal Police Chief Al LaChance at the April 6 General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center.

In 2013, LaChance said, Grand Ronde police officers handled 1,756 total events with 35 percent of the events occurring at Spirit Mountain Casino and 24 percent originating in Tribal housing.

During the first quarter of 2014, the Grand Ronde Police Department is on a pace to easily surpass 2013's totals.

LaChance said the department has already arrested 52 people, handled 158 cases, dealt with 701 total events and seized more than \$2,000 worth of illicit drugs.

The Tribal Police Department opened in 2012 with LaChance, a former longtime employee of the Redmond Police Department, being sworn in as chief on Nov. 16, 2012. He joined Sgt. Jake McKnight as the only two officers at the time.

Since then, the Police Department hired two experienced officers in the spring of 2013 and started a K-9 program. This February, the department sent recruit



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Grand Ronde Police Chief Al LaChance briefs the membership about the police department's activity in 2013 during the General Council meeting in the Tribal Community Center on Sunday, April 6.

Tyler Brown, a Tribal member, to the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training Academy and sent Nixwa, the Tribal police dog, and Officer Patrick McConnell to a training academy in Arizona. Brown is scheduled to graduate in June and Nixwa and McConnell are due back in early May.

Nixwa (Chinuk Wawa for "show me") is a 2.5-year-old Belgian Malinois and is No. 1 in his training class, LaChance said.

Currently, the Grand Ronde Police Department includes LaChance, McKnight, three police officers including Nixwa, a recruit, Emergency Management Coordinator Jamie Baxter and one admin-

istrative support employee, Tribal member Mindy Lane. This fall, LaChance said, he hopes to hire two more police officers.

LaChance said the Grand Ronde Police Department passed an Oregon State Police audit in January, which bodes well for when the U.S. Department of Justice conducts its audit within the next couple of years.

"We were one of a handful of agencies in the state of Oregon to successfully pass our audit with no problems," LaChance said. "That's pretty big considering we're a new agency."

In response to a question, LaChance said Tribal police officers seize marijuana most often because

they can smell it on people they stop. However, once Nixwa comes on board, he expects an increase in the seizure of other drugs because dogs have better scent detection capabilities than humans.

LaChance added that he hopes to eventually hire a second forest patrol officer for the Tribal Reservation, purchase a canine bulletproof vest for Nixwa, start a Neighborhood Watch program and purchase equipment so that those who are arrested can be fingerprinted locally. The equipment also would allow the Tribal department to fingerprint local children for identification purposes, he added.

A video of LaChance's 33-minute presentation can be viewed on the Tribal Web site, www.grandronde.org.

In other action, Patti LeClaire, Kailiyah Krehbiel and Jan Looking Wolf Reibach won the \$50 door prizes and George Wilson won the \$100 door prize. Reibach donated his winnings to Tribal Royalty.

The final General Council meeting of the season will be held 11 a.m. Sunday, May 4, in the Community Center.

Reibach, Tribal Council member Jon A. George, Eric Bernando and Jade Unger provided the cultural drumming and singing to open the meeting. Dakota Whitecloud provided the invocation.

After the General Council meeting, tours of the new Women's Transition House and Chachalu Museum and Cultural Center were offered. ■

Tribal Council appoints TERO Commission members

By Dean Rhodes

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Tribal Council appointed five people to the new TERO Commission on April 2.

The commission is charged with ensuring the provisions of the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance adopted by Tribal Council in 2013 are carried out.

TERO Commission members are Bryan Langley and Eirik Thorsgard (three-year terms); Shelley Sneed and Lewis Younger (two-year terms); and Alton Butler (one-year term). All but Sneed are also Tribal employees.

Tribal Council also approved a base \$325 stipend per month for TERO Commission members, who must attend the monthly meeting to receive the stipend. Commission members also will receive \$50 for each additional meeting they participate in with a total stipend limit of \$425 per month per commissioner.

In other action during the April 2 meeting, Tribal Council made numerous re-appointments to committees and special event boards.

Those re-appointed are:

- Tammy Cook and Shelby Olson-Rogers to the Education Committee;
- Penny DeLoe and Deanna Johnston to the Election Board;
- Michael Mercier, Margaret Provost and Terri Wood to the En-

rollment Committee;

- Tracy Howerton, John Lillard, Steve Bobb Jr. and Harold Lyon to the Fish & Wildlife Committee;
- Ed Ashman, Marvin "Duke" Kimsey, Jim Holmes and Lyon to the Rodeo Special Event Board;
- And Eugene LaBonte, Ken Laferty and Bob Mercier to the Timber Committee.

Tribal Council also approved 30-day extensions for Marline Groshong and Matt Thomas to serve on the Ceremonial Hunting Board; Linda Brandon and Margaret Provost to serve on the Culture Committee; Gladys Hobbs, Bernadine Shriver and Patti Tom-Martin to serve on the Health Committee; Carol Gleason and Tonya Gleason-Shepek to serve on the Social Services Committee; and for Wayne Chulik, Bob Duncan, Reina Nelson and Wink Soderberg to serve on the Veterans Special Event Board.

Tribal Council also approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe and paying \$2,590 for 2014-15 membership dues in the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments and its Economic Development District.

In addition, Tribal Council approved applying to the Administration for Native Americans for a two-year, \$543,449 museum grant to renovate the research library and conference room at the Chachalu

Cultural Center and Museum. The grant also would help pay for an oral history specialist for two years, college intern to work on an eighth-grade Tribal history curriculum with Education staff and a half-time archivist.

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno also announced that educational meetings regarding the June 6 constitutional election will be held April 12 in Portland and Eugene. The Grand Ronde session will be held following the April 16 Tribal Council meeting.

Leno said the Bureau of Indian Affairs will send out voter registration packets on April 9 and ballots will be sent out on May 22.

Tribal voters are being asked to end Bureau of Indian Affairs participation in Tribal elections and to institute limits of three consecutive terms for future service on Tribal Council.

Also included in the April 2 Tribal Council packet were authorizations

to proceed that:

- Authorized the Natural Resources Department to supply two logs for use by Tribal Engineer Jesse White in construction of the plankhouse-style entrance at Chachalu;
- Approved the Fish and Wildlife Committee to require background checks for applicants to become ceremonial hunters. The screenings will look for felonies and fish and game violations, and be conducted by the Grand Ronde Police Department;
- Recommended Fish & Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen to serve as the Tribal representative on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative Conservation Team.

Thorsgard, Jordan Mercier, Jan Looking Wolf Reibach, Tribal Council member Jon A. George and Marcus Gibbons provided the cultural drumming and singing to open the meeting. ■

District seeking Budget Committee member

The Polk Soil and Water Conservation District's Budget Committee has one opening for a new citizen member. The appointed citizen member must be a qualified voter of Polk County. The appointment is for a three-year term. The commitment is a minimum of two evening meetings to plan the budget for the Polk Soil and Conservation District, along with other tasks as assigned by the Budget Committee. Meetings are on May 7 and, if needed, May 21. If you are interested in applying, contact Debbie Miller at 503-623-9680, ext. 101, or by e-mail at debbie.miller@polkswcd.com. ■