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# Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

## Tribe prepares to celebrate 31 years of Restoration

By Dean Rhodes  
*Smoke Signals editor*

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will celebrate its 31st anniversary of Restoration, which occurred on Nov. 22, 1983, with a day's worth of events on Saturday, Nov. 22.

The celebration starts at 9 a.m. with a prayer service for Tribal members and their families at the Atudship rock mound, which is designed to be a sacred memorial for healing. The site, first used during 2013's 30th Restoration celebration, is located on the Lash property immediately north of the Tribal Cemetery off Grand Ronde Road.

The Atudship rock mound is a monument honoring the plight and Restoration of the more than 27 Tribes and bands that make up the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

"Atudship" is a Tualatin-Kalapuya term meaning to heap up earth and rocks, a Native ceremony that is usually associated with the practice of obtaining spirit power.

The prayer service is being coordinated by the Tribe's Land and Culture Department. People are asked to bring

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Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tresa Mercier, Tribal Health & Wellness Business Office manager, has worked for the Tribe for 30 years. She is the Tribe's first 30-year employee.

## Mercier recalls last 30 years

By Ron Karten  
*Smoke Signals editor*

Tresa Mercier was hired by the Tribe as an intern in April 1984, not too long after Restoration occurred on Nov. 22, 1983. That was more than 30 years ago when she

was 19.

Today, at 49, she is the Tribe's longest-serving employee ever and the Health and Wellness

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## Feds file notice to take land into trust for Cowlitz

By Dean Rhodes  
*Smoke Signals editor*

The federal government filed a motion on Wednesday, Oct. 22, in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia stating that the Department of the Interior intends to take land into trust in southwestern Washington state for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe as early as Jan. 21, 2015.

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe has been trying unsuccessfully since 2002 to take approximately 152 acres into trust near La Center – about 15 miles north of the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area – so that it can build a mega-casino complex on the property.

However, the city of Vancouver, nearby property owners, Citizens Against Reservation

Shopping and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have filed lawsuits against the proposal, stating, among other things, that the Cowlitz Tribe's traditional homelands are about 60 miles farther north in the Toledo, Wash., area.

"It doesn't make sense for the Department of the Interior to take the La Center land into trust," said Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno. "That would allow the Cowlitz Tribe to move forward with its casino. Then, if the court says it was illegal for the department to take the land into trust, the Cowlitz would have to close their casino. This is truly putting the cart before the horse."

Leno added that the Grand Ronde Tribe is staying on top of the issue. ■

## Tribal Police to start issuing concealed carry permits

By Dean Rhodes  
*Smoke Signals editor*

With the passage of a new Tribal Public Safety Ordinance that went into effect on Thursday, Oct. 16, the Grand Ronde Police Department is preparing to start issuing concealed carry permits on Tribal lands.

The revised Public Safety Ordinance, adopted by Tribal Council on Sept. 24, transfers the authority to issue concealed carry permits from Tribal Court to the Police Department.

"The obligation used to rest with the Tribal Court, but in anticipation of the move of the responsibility to the Police Department, existing permits were not renewed," said Tribal Police Records and Evidence Technician Mindy Lane.

Lane said the Police Department has received one application and there were four other applications

pending.

The biggest caveat in obtaining a Tribal concealed carry permit is that applicants must already possess a valid concealed carry permit or concealed handgun license issued by an Oregon county.

Lane said that applications will be taken by appointment only and the Police Department must take a photo, obtain a signature and make copies of identity documents.

"The application process from start to finish takes about two weeks, including performing and reviewing the necessary background checks," Lane said.

Tribal concealed carry permits are valid only on designated Grand Ronde lands. Permit holders are not allowed to carry into any Tribal building, any location or event where Tribal business is being

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