

NOTICE TO ALL TRIBAL MEMBERS ON THE SSI/SSD SUPPLEMENTAL INCOME PROGRAM

Attention Tribal members;

It's getting to be that time of year again. Time to remember to send us a copy of your current (2014-15 preferably) benefit statement from the Social Security Administration so that we can update your file. If you do not receive your current benefit statement you may order one by calling the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or go online at www.ssa.gov. Your current benefit statement must reach our office by Jan. 31, 2015, to avoid any future delays in your benefits. For Elders age 55 and up, if you have been qualified under the SSA department as SSI (Social Security Supplemental Income) or SSD (Social Security Disability) Eligible, your pension checks may qualify as non-taxable. We will need a copy of that document (SSA award letter) on file in order for this to take effect.

We have updated our SSI/SSD application form and it will be required that all Tribal members in the SSI/SSD Supplemental Program have a new updated application form in their file. This application form will be mailed to all current members of this program within the next 30 days. Please complete and return the form at your earliest convenience. If you are a new member to this program (within the last 60 days) you have already submitted the updated application and do not need to complete another, but you will need to submit your new award letter for the year 2015.

Please mail copies of your benefit statement to:

CTGR Member Services
Attn: Jolanda Catabay
9615 Grand Ronde Road
Grand Ronde, OR 97347

You may also e-mail or fax a copy to the following: Fax: 1-800-879-2480 or e-mail: Jolanda.catabay@grandronde.org.

Note: It is the responsibility of the Tribal member to notify the Tribe of any changes in your benefits from the Social Security Administration SSI/SSD program. Failure to notify the Tribe may result in an obligation to repay ineligible benefits received, interrupt or delay your Tribal Supplemental Security Income and Disability payments.

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions or concerns. My contact numbers are 503-879-2253 or toll-free 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2253.

Respectfully,

Jolanda Catabay
Enrollment Member Services Specialist
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

Birthday saluted

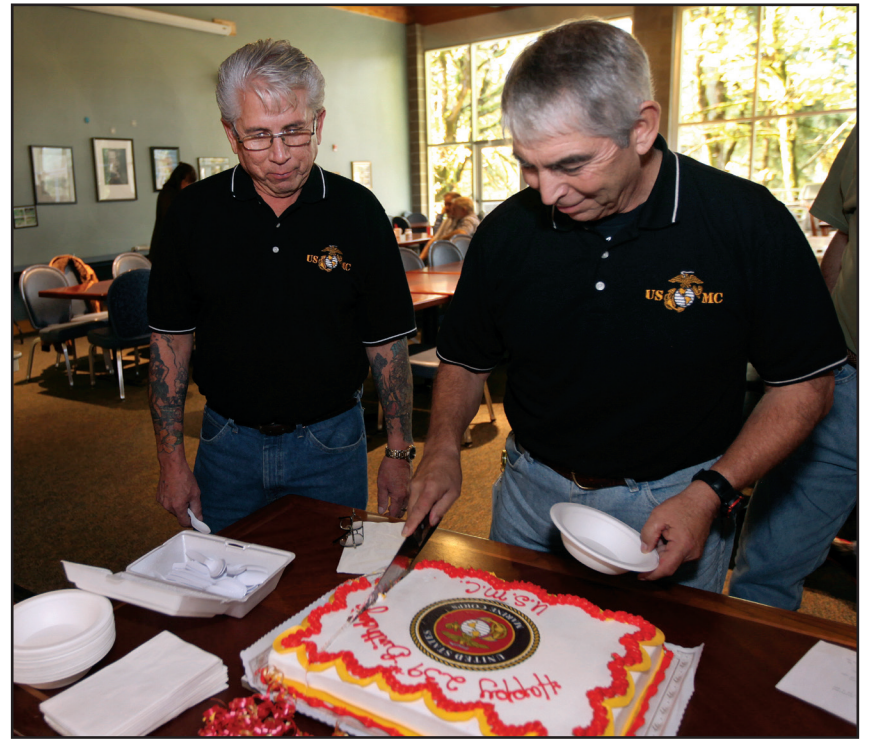


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Alton Butler, right, cuts a carrot cake as fellow Elder Steve Bobb Sr. waits to serve the pieces during a celebration of the U.S. Marine Corps' 239th birthday at the Elders Activity Center on Friday, Nov. 7. Both men served in the Marine Corps.

Board accepting applications

The Tribe's Cultural Trust Board is beginning its 2014-15 grant-making round for grants ranging from \$250 to a maximum of \$1,000 available for Grand Ronde Tribal members to use for cultural projects or activities that support the understanding, practice and preservation of traditional Tribal heritage and culture. The grant-making round opened Friday, Oct. 31, and closes Monday, Dec. 15. Interested Tribal members can pick up an application at the front desk in the Governance Center or mail the Cultural Trust Board at Grand Ronde Cultural Trust Board, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347, to have an application mailed to you.

Completed applications must be received by noon Monday, Dec. 15.

The project is supported by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and funded by Oregon Cultural Trust, which invests in Oregon's arts, humanities and heritage. ■

Community gatherings to be organized

FOOD BANK continued from front page

ty wants and needs. This is not a cookie cutter plan."

The Tribe wants to know how the system works, if the operation needs to be improved and how best to do that.

To that end, Food Share has turned to University of Oregon graduate student Lexi Stickel. Her expertise is in conflict resolution and nonprofit management. She has a 12-month contract, ending in August, to develop a community foods assessment. Food Share will then follow up.

Stickel will organize community gatherings to discuss the area's challenges and local assets that can be marshalled. The result of that work will be a community foods assessment, which will be a written document that summarizes the current state of the overall emergency food system locally and identifies key ideas or projects worth pursuing.

"Lexi's role is to listen to the community first, and support and empower the community to find solutions that make access to good food easier for all," says Dixon-McDonald. "Actual implementation of specific ideas will be primarily up

to the community itself."

Included in the process will be the sourcing of fresh vegetables, breads and meats – all the food that goes into a healthy diet. Among the questions that need to be answered: Does the community need a grocery store that will be a local source of fresh food? How might the community garden contribute? Everything that goes into getting emergency food to Tribal and community members, and making access easy, are up for consideration.

A tip of the hat is due to longtime volunteers and members of the Grand Ronde Community Resource Center board. Many have been serving for years. They are Chair Ellen Fischer, Vice Chair Claudia Leno, Secretary Julie Duncan, Louise Medeiros and Candy Robertson.

Currently, says Duncan, the facility off Hebo Road serves 600 families and "every month we get five to 10 new people."

Food Share has been hiring for the manager position and is using Tribal preference as encouragement for applications from people already in the Grand Ronde Tribal community.

"It's not a guarantee," says Dixon-McDonald, "but that is our

preference."

By the application deadline, up to 10 people had applied, according to Connie Holmes, Tribal Human Resources manager.

In addition to the manager position, Food Share is seeking as many as 20 to 25 volunteers, Dixon-McDonald says.

The new building, a 3,300-square-foot food distribution center, is located at 9675 Grand Ronde Road, across the street from the Tribal Housing Authority building. It contains a warehouse/distribution area that includes a walk-in cooler and freezer, training room/kitchen, waiting and reception area, and office space.

"It was designed for our current needs," says George, "and there is room for building expansion."

The project has been funded by a \$500,000 Housing & Urban Development Indian Community Development block grant as well as an Indian Housing block grant in the amount of \$204,179 that the Tribal Housing Authority also paid as the Tribe's match obligation. The total development budget was \$704,179. The final cost came in under budget at \$700,350.87.

Also, the Tribe is seeking U.S. Department of Agriculture grants

to support commodities needed at the food bank.

Tribal Council also is seeking a Chinuk Wawa name for the food bank.

With a \$2.5 million to \$3 million budget, Marion-Polk Food Share distributes 8 million pounds of food annually and serves 40,000 individuals a month, says Dixon-McDonald.

Salem-based Food Share supports 102 partner agencies that distribute food from the nonprofit's warehouse. It also supports a network of 48 food box sites in two counties. This is Food Share's first foray into managing a food bank.

"It's a new type of project for us," Dixon-McDonald says.

"I'll miss all the people, the clients we've gotten to know," says Duncan. "We can laugh with them and joke with them. I've been doing it for four years."

With her spare time now, Duncan says, "I work for the Elders Committee, so I'll have more time to spend there."

"It's time to rebuild," says George, "to invite folks to work with the Tribe and Food Share, and do as good as they can to provide for children, families and Elders." ■