

Tribal Council OKs arbor contract

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Upcoming events held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds will be a little more comfortable and safer now that Tribal Council has approved a construction contract to build an arbor at the site during its Wednesday, Feb. 25, meeting.

Tribal Council approved a contract not to exceed \$698,476 with Chris Scholten Construction of Willamina to build the 20,000-square-foot arbor, which will feature a removable shade and rain cover.

In addition, Tribal Council approved an amendment to the previously approved Jurassic Park Logging Unit that will allow use of the necessary amount of Douglas fir logs from the Reservation in the arbor's construction.

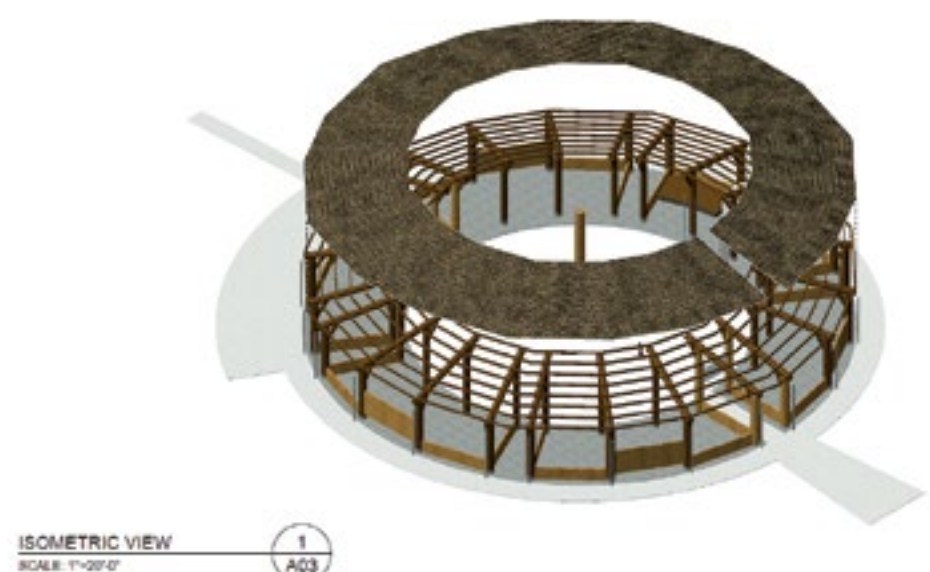
"We're trying to use as much wood off the Reservation as we possibly can to build this arbor," Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno said during the Feb. 24 Legislative Action Committee meeting.

In addition, a new concrete slab will surround the 100-foot diameter powwow dance area that will be composed of soil and natural grass, which will be smoothed out to prevent sprained ankles, said Tribal Engineer Jesse White.

"It will be a nice, smooth surface," White said.

A new access road and handicapped parking area also will be constructed at the powwow grounds.

A Powwow Arbor Design Team has been meeting since October and



This drawing shows the design of the arbor that is being built at the Tribe's Uyxat Powwow Grounds. The 20,000-square-foot arbor will be constructed out of Douglas fir logs from the Tribe's Reservation land and will have a rain/shade cover over it during powwows.

included staff from the Engineering Department, General Manager's Office, Public Works, Facilities, Land and Culture and Information Services and representatives from Tribal Council and the Veterans and the Powwow special event boards.

The arbor is scheduled to be completed before the Marcellus Northwest Memorial Veterans Powwow being held July 10-12.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved a grant application to the Administration for Native Americans for a three-year Environmental Regulatory Enhancement grant totaling \$410,767. The grant would provide equipment

and consultant and staff support to improve the population counts of fish and wildlife under the Tribe's Wildlife Management Plan so that realistic harvest limits can be set on the Reservation.

- Approved another application to the Administration for Native Americans for a three-year Esther Martinez language grant totaling \$836,461 that would expand the half-day Chinuk Wawa Immersion Program to kindergarten through third grade.
- Approved a resolution supporting Polk County's public safety levy that will be on the May 19 ballot and allowing the use of the Tribe's name and logo on levy campaign materials.
- Approved the agenda for the March 1 General Council meeting, which will include an update on economic development activities and an informational session

on the March 14 constitutional amendment election. Tribal members are being asked to vote on whether to eliminate Bureau of Indian Affairs involvement in Tribal constitutional elections and whether to require future Tribal Council members to take a year off after serving three consecutive terms.

- Approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe and corrected the blood quantum of two Tribal members.
- Approved a maximum \$7.77 million loan from the Tribe's line of credit to fund 2015 capital improvement projects at Spirit Mountain Casino, including purchasing 150 new slot machines and approximately 1,800 slot chairs, exterior painting, a parking lot overlay and kitchen renovations needed for safety reasons, among other projects.
- Set March 13 as the next per capita payment date.

Also included in the Feb. 25 Tribal Council packet were authorizations to proceed that give the Land and Culture Department permission to proceed with a historical exhibit in collaboration with the Chehalem Cultural Center and directed staff to begin the approval process with the BIA to lease a one-acre portion of the Risseeuw property to Light-house Recovery Services Group.

Tribal Council member Jon A. George and Land and Culture Department employees Bobby Mercier and Brian Krehbiel and Willamina High School senior Miguel Alvarado opened the meeting with cultural drumming and singing.

The meeting, in its entirety, can be viewed on the Tribal website, www.grandronde.org, under the News tab and then click on the Video link. ■

Health care scholarship seeking applications

West Valley Hospital Foundation scholarship applications for students in medically related fields of study became available on Feb. 1 and applications must be returned by March 27.

Applicants must have a permanent residence in Polk County or be a current employee or family member of a current employee at West Valley Hospital, and must have applied to a college in their field of study before applying for this scholarship.

Visit www.salemhealth.org/scholarships and click on the West Valley Hospital scholarship link. Call 503-831-3456 for more information. ■

Wisdom of the Elders seeking mentors

Wisdom of the Elders is seeking Native American high school and college youth in the Portland area to serve as peer mentors for Discovering Yidong Xinag – “the old wisdom” in the Deg Xinag dialect of Athabaskan.

This youth leadership initiative is designed to engage Native youth in environmental and climate studies through service learning by serving as peer mentors to middle school youth. Participants will have opportunities to learn about their local ecosystem, explore higher education in science, technology, engineering and math, and pursue career pathways.

Native peer mentors will receive a stipend for participating in weekend trainings from April through June as they learn about local and regional environmental and climate issues, GIS survey mapping, skills training in peer mentoring and leadership, and video production and post-production editing to produce a short video featuring their Summer Field Science Camp group.

Youth will serve as peer mentors at Wisdom's Summer Field Science Camps for Native youth in June and July.

For an application or if you have questions, contact Amanda Kelley Lopez at amanda@wisdomoftheelders.org or call 503-775-4014. Applications are being accepted until March 31. You also can visit www.wisdomoftheelders.org for more information. ■

Dragon tales



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Librarian Marion Mercier adds scales to the Library Dragon for the “Get Fired Up for Reading” incentive program at the Tribal Library on Tuesday, Feb. 24. The program involves adding a scale with a reader’s name and the title of the book written on it to the dragon for each book read. The program runs through March 5 and is for readers of all ages. Mercier is hoping this year’s scales will break last year’s record of 227.