

Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

The force rearranges

**New police chief
takes over in
February; Security
Department created**

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

Not many people get to retire twice. When Grand Ronde Tribal Elder and outgoing Tribal Police Chief Al LaChance announced late last year that he would be retiring as chief of police in February, the search for a new leader began.

Fortunately, the search didn't take long and didn't have to look too far.

Tribal member and Grand Ronde Police Department Sgt. Jake McKnight was tapped to take over as police chief and he has been performing the role since being hired in December. The Tribal Police Department has been operating with two leaders since late last year.

LaChance, 63, previously retired after spending 31 years working for the Redmond Police Department before coming to Grand Ronde as the first Tribal chief of police in 2012.

McKnight, who was hired as the Tribe's first police officer after graduating from the



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Grand Ronde Tribal Police Chief Al LaChance, right, is retiring in February and Jake McKnight, who was sergeant and is a Tribal member, is taking over as police chief. LaChance, a Tribal Elder, was the first chief of the Grand Ronde Police Department.

Oregon Public Safety Academy, had been getting the department up and running just before LaChance came over from Redmond. Previously, McKnight had worked as the Tribe's forest patrol officer with the Natural Resources Department.

"When we initially started, Jake had laid down the foundation for the department," said

LaChance. "Over the last three years we all worked together as a department to make this a successful police department."

As of February, the department will con-

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Chips retirement

Special issues losing face value beginning on May 4

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

Players look at casino chips as a way to track their winnings.

Casino properties look at chips as cash.

But collectors look at playing chips as pieces of art and history.

Spirit Mountain Casino issued a public notice on Monday, Jan. 4, that collectors are going to like. The casino's special event and collector playing chips will be discontinued and no longer accepted at face

value.

Collector chips like the Martha Jane Sands and Indian Boy \$25 chips from 2008, the seventh anniversary \$5 chips from 2002, the 10th anniversary \$5 chips from 2005 and the 20th anniversary \$5 chips from 2015 will officially become collector items in May.

People wanting to receive face value for their specialty chips have until May 4 to redeem them

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General Council canceled due to lack of quorum

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

In an extremely rare occurrence, the Sunday, Jan. 3, General Council meeting was canceled when less than 30 Tribal members, which is the Tribal Constitution benchmark for a quorum, were able to attend.

Attendance was hampered by rain falling in most of western Oregon over a cold air mass that created icy road conditions from Portland to Salem and points in-between.

The scheduled program report by staff members of the Natural Resources Department was postponed to the next General Council meeting, which will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 7, in the Pacific Ballroom at the Monarch Hotel, 12566 S.E. 93rd Ave., off Interstate 205 near Clackamas Town Center.

The dicey and icy road conditions continued into Monday, Jan. 4, when the Tribe initially announced

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