

# Security being brought in-house

**POLICE continued from front page**

sist of McKnight as chief, Officer Tim Hernandez has been promoted to sergeant and there are five officers – Patrick McConnell, Ron Wellborn, Rod McAllister, Grand Ronde Tribal member Tyler Brown and new officer Tokata Tehama, who starts on Monday, Jan. 18. Tehama is a Klamath Tribal member who lives in the area.

“I had a great group of people to work with,” said LaChance.

McKnight, 38, said having the opportunity to work alongside LaChance for the last two months was invaluable.

“That was a blessing,” said McKnight. “For me, I think it is important for people to know that nothing is going to change. It’s going to be just like chief (LaChance) was here. We’re going to carry on like before. No one will even notice a difference.”

General Manager Dave Fullerton said that Tribal leadership is thankful to have had someone of LaChance’s caliber and expertise as chief to get the new police department off the ground and up to speed.

“He (LaChance) did what we asked him to do,” said Fullerton. “He came in and in three years helped us set up, helped us build relationships, helped us get established and get our law enforcement moving forward. That’s a big task to take on and he did that. It’s that step toward complete self-determination. Now we’re looking to Jake to carry that torch and continue to get us established in the community.”

Fullerton said McKnight will be setting goals and working on focus

areas, such as proper community policing, to really have an effect on and a presence in the community.

“He’s (McKnight) going to be spending his days doing the work, doing the important stuff. He has the passion and the drive to do it,” said Fullerton. “I think they do a very good job right now. I think it will be a good transition. We’re looking forward to it.”

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno said everything is coming together in the police department.

“Members of council felt very strongly that having law enforcement is a big part of sovereignty,” said Leno. “We were very fortunate to have someone like the chief (LaChance) who had a lot of experience and who came in and was very willing to work to get things set up.”

“When you look at someone like Jake, he’s local, he grew up here and it’s great to see our people get opportunities like this and take advantage of them. They (Tribal police officers) do hard work and he did a lot of hard work to earn it.”

Leno said McKnight has earned the respect of the community by the way he carries himself and how he has treated people over the last three years.

“I think it was a really positive thing all the way around,” said Leno.

McKnight said the Tribal community has accepted him as a law enforcement officer and that being able to talk to people on their level has been a big help.



**Juan Sifuentez**

“People like that they are able to just come and talk to me because that is a big thing. That’s important,” said McKnight. “I just let people know I’m doing my job and people get that. You don’t let your ego get to you just because you are carrying a badge.”

Leno said that McKnight has the ability to talk to community members.

“I think one of the most important things for a police officer is their communication with the community,” said Leno. “If you have that communication it will help you become successful and keep you successful.”

Leno said the Tribal police department has had a positive effect on the community.

“It’s made an impact here in our community with the decline of drug and criminal activity,” said Leno. “I think that is really the tell-tale report card on it. In our case, it really has made a difference. They (Grand Ronde Tribal police officers) want to help people as opposed to saying, ‘Here is the law and we’re going to dictate it to you.’ They feel they have input to the community and the community trusts them.”

LaChance said he feels a sense of pride when he looks back on his three years running the department.

“What I want to share with everybody in the community is this department is more about educating people than busting people,” said LaChance. “We are here for the community and I think people are starting to understand that in the years that I have been here. It’s about having credibility and having the respect of the people you are serving.”

LaChance said he will always be a part of the Tribal community now. “I’m just a phone call away,” he said.

**Security being brought in-house**

Current Advanced Security Supervisor Juan Sifuentez has been offered and accepted the new position of Tribal Security Department manager. The new department will be up and running in the next few weeks and Sifuentez said he is excited about building the new program.

“We are transitioning to a Tribal Security Department,” said Fullerton. “We have offered Juan the job and he will start in two weeks.”

Then we are going to start training Tribal member security guards. It’s that movement in the direction of us directing that work instead of someone else.”

Sifuentez, who has 28 years of experience working security, has been working for the Tribe for 18 years.

“I’m very excited,” said Sifuentez. “I’m glad to be given this opportunity. I’ve always been loyal and I think that everybody knows that. I’m very committed to the Tribe. I am a part of this community and I believe the people trust me.”

Leno said he is confident in Sifuentez and his ability to build the program.

“Juan has been here so long that he has become part of the community,” said Leno. “I think people respond to him. I think they respect him and they communicate with him.”

Leno said the job ahead is much like what the Tribe asked LaChance to accomplish when he was lured out of retirement to become the first police chief.

“I think having him here to get us kicked off and in the right direction kind of falls in line with our chief when he was here to kick off our police force,” said Leno. “I believe it’s a win-win for everybody.”

Leno said the biggest difference community members will notice with the new Security Department will be the hiring of more local people as guards.

“When local people are aware of the issues, they have a lot better ability to deal with the issues,” said Leno.

Sifuentez said the way he approaches his job will not change.

“I’m here to help,” said Sifuentez. “I want to help everybody. For me, that’s what it’s all about.”

Sifuentez said after being in the community for so long, he sees the Tribe and its people as his family.

“That’s the way I look at it,” said Sifuentez. “I don’t see it as coming to work; I see it as coming to visit my family. I’m just elated I’m getting this opportunity. I can’t wait to take it on and make the Security Department top-notch.”

LaChance said the new Security Department is a big piece of keeping the community safe and that Sifuentez is the correct fit for the job.

“His (Sifuentez) historical knowledge of the Tribe is invaluable,” said LaChance. “It’s going to be great.” ■

**Do you want to join the Child Care Profession?**

The **Grand Ronde Tribe Children & Family Services Program** has recognized a need for **Child Care in the community**

We are hosting a week of trainings to help individuals move towards licensing as a Registered Family Provider

**Trainings are FREE for first 10 registrations!**

Date	Training	Time
Wednesday January 27th, 2016	Overview Dinner provided	5:30pm-8:30pm Free
Saturday, January 30th, 2016	Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect Lunch provided	10am-12pm \$10
Saturday, January 30th, 2016	CPR & First Aid	1pm-5pm \$35

**Location:**

**Community Service Center  
9615 Grand Ronde Rd**

**Child Care Resource & Referral**

**Call to sign up**

**503-585-2491 or 800-289-5533**

**Groups form Helping Hands**

The Clothes Closet, iskam mək'mək haws and A Cause For Paws have started an ad hoc group called Grand Ronde Helping Hands and are inviting community members to join the effort of supporting local families.

“The goal is to bring those of us together who are supporting families in Grand Ronde to share the services and resources we provide and create a resource guide we can all use,” said Food Bank Coordinator Francene Ambrose.

“If you provide any type of services to families in our community, please consider attending,” Ambrose said. “We are looking for meal site calendars, food box sites, clothes closets, showers and laundry services. We are asking churches, church groups, departments and support groups to share with us.”

If you are interested in joining the effort, contact Ambrose at 503-879-3663 or at fambrose@marionpolkfoodshare.org. ■