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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Tribe readies for second hunting season

46 Tribal hunters received tags in 2015

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

Grand Ronde's initial Tribally-managed hunts occurred in 2015 during deer and elk seasons and Natural Resources Department staff members are preparing for them to occur again.

Last year's hunting tags were the first ever issued by a Native American Tribe in Oregon to its members for hunting on its own land. The hunts were scheduled at times that were offset from regular state-sanctioned hunts, giving Tribal members an opportunity they would not have otherwise had. "This is a huge step in Tribal sovereignty," said Tribal Wildlife Biologist Lindsay Belonga. "This

was the first ever Tribally-managed hunt on our own lands that we've ever done." Belonga said the opportunity came about because of the hard work done by Natural Resources Department staff and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission staff to pass a Tribal Wildlife Management Plan in September 2014. By approving the plan, the state

commission delegated its authority to the Tribe to be exercised on Reservation and trust lands in accordance with the provisions outlined in the management plan. "It took eight years to get to that point," said Belonga. The collaboration of hard work finally paid off when four hunts

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Elders' pension payments moving to first of the month

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

Beginning June 1, Grand Ronde Tribal Elders will start receiving their pension benefit nine days earlier when the payment date changes to the first day of the month. "The reason that we're doing it is last year we looked at the calendar for this year and for 2017, and the way that the per capita has been falling it's either on the same day as per cap or one falls on one day and the other falls on the next," said Member Services Department Manager Penny DeLoe. "That's a lot of work on us and it's a lot of work on Finance."

Tribal Council held a first reading on amendments to the Elders Retirement Program and SSI Program Ordinance during its Wednesday, Feb. 17, meeting, which was the first step in approving the change in payment dates.

DeLoe said she participated in a meeting with Enrollment Specialist Jolanda Catabay, Controller Linda Hanna, Staff Accountant Michelle Peterson and Senior Staff Attorney Deneen Aubertin Keller to discuss the benefit distribution and that they agreed the change in distribution dates made sense.

"Everybody was on the same page with it because in June they are also bringing all the

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Photos by Michelle Alaimo



Tribal Elder and the Tribe's oldest member Pearl Lyon looks at a card that the Elders made for her and gave to her during her 104th birthday celebration held at the Elders Activity Center on Friday, Feb. 19. Her birthday was Feb. 20.



Lyon's 104th birthday

Tribal Elder Pearl Lyon talks with fellow Elder Kathryn Harrison during her 104th birthday celebration.

Friends again: Val Grout, Beryle Contreras reconnect at AFC

Tribal Elders Val Grout, left, and Beryle Contreras talk in the Tribe's Adult Foster Care Cougar Lodge on Friday, Feb. 19.



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

By Brent Merrill
Smoke Signals staff writer

Two of the Tribe's most celebrated Tribal Elders — Valrene May (Houck) Grout and Beryle Larose (Langley) Contreras — have come full circle from their days as childhood friends to their current days of being residents at the Tribe's Adult Foster Care lodges.

The two Elders say they couldn't be happier about completing that circle back home in Grand Ronde. Grout lives in Elk Lodge and Beryle lives in Cougar Lodge. Both ladies, each 80, were recently surrounded by family at the Elders Activity Center as they sat by

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