



Spring Break camp  
— pg. 12

# Smoke Signals

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

APRIL 1, 2016

www.grandronde.org

UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

## Court hears Cowlitz appeal on March 18

By Dean Rhodes  
*Smoke Signals editor*

An appeal of a December 2014 ruling that favored the Department of the Interior's decision to take land into trust for the Cowlitz Tribe near La Center, Wash., was heard Friday, March 18, by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C.

The two main appellants – the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Clark County, Wash. – were represented by attorneys Lawrence Robbins and Benjamin Sharp, respectively, while Department of Justice attorney John Smeltzer represented the Department of the Interior and Robert Luskin represented the Cowlitz Tribe.

The three-judge panel that heard the appeal included Cornelia Pillard, Robert Wilkins and Harry Edwards. Each side received approximately 15 minutes apiece to present their arguments.

At issue was a lower court decision by District Court Judge Barbara Rothstein that favored the department's decision to take land into trust for a Cowlitz Reservation just 15 miles north of the Vancouver/Portland metropolitan area.

Attending the hearing were Grand Ronde Tribal Council members Chairman Reyn Leno, Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr., Brenda Tuomi, Jon A. George, Tonya Gleason-Shepek and Denise Harvey. Tribal Attorney Rob Greene, Assistant Tribal Attorney Kim D'Aquila and Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Martin also attended.

Robbins said during the appeal hearing that for the Department of the Interior to take land into trust for the Cowlitz Tribe under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell must make two independent decisions: That the Cowlitz Tribe was a recognized Tribe and that the Cowlitz were under federal jurisdiction.

"The Record of Decision in this case misconstrues the IRA in both of those separate and

See APPEAL  
continued on page 4



Sisters Cloey, left, and Riley Freeman get candy from the Easter Bunny, aka Tribal Elder Steve Bobb Sr., during the Tribe's annual Easter egg hunt held at Tribal Housing on Saturday, March 26.

## Early Easter

After climbing a rock wall, Kalea Liebelt, 4, grabs an egg during the Tribe's annual Easter egg hunt held at Tribal Housing on Saturday, March 26. More photos on page 13.

Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Visit the Tribe's  
**facebook**  
page to see more photos



## Tribal Elder Richard Ray kept on trucking through his life

Tribal Elder Richard "Mushy" Ray, left, listens as his wife, Kathryn Ray, right, talks about him during a Celebration of Life held at the Elders Activity Center on Saturday, March 5.

Photo by Michelle Alaimo



By Brent Merrill  
*Smoke Signals staff writer*

When a celebration of life is held before you walk on, you know you have lived a good life.

In the words of Grand Ronde Tribal Elder Richard "Mushy" Ray, "I'm on a different path."

Fellow Tribal Elders thought enough of Ray's good life so far that they held a celebration gathering at

the Elders Activity Center in Grand Ronde on Saturday, March 5, and he says it was "too much."

"It was too nice," says Ray from a hospital bed in the living room of his Willamina home. He was surrounded by his wife of 27 years, Kathryn, and his sister-in-law, Star Thomas, and dear family friend

See ELDER FEATURE  
continued on page 13