

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings
DATE TIME
Wednesday, May 4.....5 p.m.
Wednesday, May 18.....5 p.m.
Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed.

Letters


Dear Smoke Signals:
Over three years ago, the Oregon Department of Human Services informed us that our grandchildren, who were in temporary foster care (through no fault of their own), were about to be placed for adoption or placed in permanent foster care. At the time, we were the only relatives that were available to take custody of the three girls. We went through foster care school, background checks and all the other necessary paperwork and seminars to qualify for custody. When we thought we had met all the requirements, DHS told us, “Sorry, but your house is not big enough.” We had heard something about the “grandfamily” program and Betty made an appointment with Shonn Leno in Housing to discuss the housing issue we were having with the state. Shonn and staff were very helpful with all the paperwork and Leon Ramos went the extra mile to get our new home ready on such short notice.
The house is perfect for family living with three bedrooms and two baths. There is a playground in the backyard for the little ones and easy access to the senior center. Solar panels help keep the home electric bill affordable. All this made the whole process lots less stressful. When kids are upset and insecure because they don’t understand why they cannot be with the only family they have ever known, a good, warm and secure home is an absolute must.
Things have worked out very well for us. All of the issues regarding the family have been worked out through the courts over the years and the kids have been reunited with their mother and are doing great! Kudos to the Tribe and especially those in Housing for seeing us through those troubled times. You helped make a family whole again.
With our appreciation and thanks.
Betty and Roger Bly
Roll #3544

Dear Smoke Signals:
To all Tribal members, I would like to bring attention to the Wednesday Tribal Council meeting held on April 20, 2016. The reason I am writing this letter to you is so our members that do not or cannot view this meeting know the information given.
At that meeting, I asked questions about the upcoming vote to be held concerning the definition of Grand Ronde blood. I asked a question of the four out of five members who attended that if the change of blood definition passes if they know how many new members could enroll. I told council members that I believed they owed it to the membership to give us a “yes” or “no” answer to my question that if the amendments concerning definition passed if they had any idea of how many new members could enroll.
In my opinion I felt as if the council members asked were avoiding my questions and after some time the Chair answered their question for me, which was a “No.” Following Reyn Leno’s answer, Chris Mercier and Denise Harvey said there would be information given prior to the vote. My opinion regarding this issue is that if we go into this blindly and it were to pass, no one knows how many it would bring in and how much it could affect our programs.
Another concern of mine is there is nothing in the language stopping the amount of members this could bring in if it were to get out of control. Other Tribes have made this mistake in the past and the results were disastrous.
Reyn Leno also stated later in the meeting that as hard as it has been to get meetings on this issue, he does not believe there is enough time to get information on this matter prior to the vote. In my opinion, to go blindly into this issue and vote on these matters would be very careless and irresponsible for our council to do. As of now, we have no idea how many could enroll and how hard it could affect our programs if the amendments were to pass.
Also at the meeting, Toby McClary and others expressed how they felt that having to vote on bundled amendments forced them to vote on issues they did not agree with and basically did not seem like the right thing to do. I have to say as I have in prior letters that I totally agree.

Tribal Council member Chris Mercier’s response to these statements is that he believed bundling these issues together gives them a better chance of passing.
In closing, I will state it is another opinion of mine that this bundling issue has contributed to much of the division that has arose in our membership and I sure hope this is the last time we have to face this matter. Please remember people, we are all in this together and all affected by it, and we need to try and reach the best possible answers together without making decisions that put the future of our people in danger. There is too much unknown to pass these amendments.
Rex D. Haller
Roll #905

Tribal Office Closures
Tribal offices will be closing on noon Friday, May 27, and closed on Monday, May 30, in observance of Memorial Day.


Tribal Council nominations
11 a.m. Sunday, June 26
Tribal Community Center

Smoke Signals
PUBLICATIONS OFFICE
9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347
1-800-422-0232, FAX: 503-879-2173
Website: www.grandronde.org/news
E-mail: news@grandronde.org
 **Twitter: CTGRgov**
Facebook: Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

DEAN RHODES PUBLICATIONS COORDINATOR 503-879-1463 dean.rhodes@grandronde.org	CHELSEA CLARK PUBLIC AFFAIRS/ PUBLICATIONS ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT 503-879-1418 chelsea.clark@grandronde.org	MICHELLE ALAIMO PHOTOJOURNALIST 503-879-1961 michelle.alaimo@grandronde.org
GEORGE VALDEZ GRAPHIC DESIGN SPECIALIST 503-879-1416 george.valdez@grandronde.org	JUSTIN PHILLIPS PAGE DESIGNER 503-879-2190 justin.phillips@grandronde.org	BRENT MERRILL STAFF WRITER 503-879-4663 brent.merrill@grandronde.org
SCARLETT HOLTZ CENTRAL PHONES 503-879-1447 scarlett.holtz@grandronde.org	VALERIE COX CENTRAL PHONES 503-879-1446 valerie.cox@grandronde.org	

DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Thursday, May 5	May 15
Friday, May 20	June 1
Monday, June 6	June 15

Editorial Policy
SMOKE SIGNALS, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, is published twice a month. No portion of this publication may be reprinted without permission.
Our editorial policy is intended to encourage input from Tribal members and readers about stories printed in the Tribal newspaper. However, all letters received must be signed by the author, an address must be given and a phone number or e-mail address must be included for verification purposes. Full addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless requested.
SMOKE SIGNALS reserves the right to edit letters and to refuse letters that are determined to contain libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals, staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Letters to the editor are the opinions and views of the writer. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of **SMOKE SIGNALS**, Tribal staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council.

 Members of: ■ Native American Journalists Association
■ Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association

2016 Tribal Council
1-800-422-0232 — tribalcouncil@grandronde.org

■ Reyn Leno Tribal Chairman — ext. 2399 reyn.leno@grandronde.org	■ Denise Harvey — ext. 2353 denise.harvey@grandronde.org
■ Jack Giffen Jr. Tribal Vice Chair — ext. 2300 jack.giffen@grandronde.org	■ Chris Mercier — ext. 1444 chris.mercier@grandronde.org
■ Cheryle A. Kennedy Tribal Secretary — ext. 2352 cheryle.kennedy@grandronde.org	■ Brenda Tuomi — ext. 4555 brenda.tuomi@grandronde.org
■ Ed Pearsall — ext. 2305 ed.pearsall@grandronde.org	■ Tonya Gleason-Shepek — ext. 1777 tonya.gleason-shepek@grandronde.org
	■ Jon A. George — ext. 2355 jon.george@grandronde.org