



Spirit Mountain Casino wraps up remodel — pg. 17

Smoke Signals

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

FEBRUARY 15, 2017

www.grandronde.org

UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA

Tribe reassessing its banking services with Wells Fargo

By Brent Merrill

Smoke Signals staff writer

Recent negative news about Wells Fargo Bank coupled with the bank's funding of projects like the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota has prompted Grand Ronde Tribal members to question the relationship between the Tribe and financial institution.

Among those members asking questions was Tribal Elder Tracie Meyer at the Wednesday, Jan. 25, Tribal Council meeting.

In response, Tribal member and Finance Officer Chris Leno said the Tribe has issued a request for proposals, or RFP, that will allow the Tribe to address several concerns and examine if it is getting the best deal on its banking funds.

Leno said the Tribe routinely issues RFPs every three to five years so questions from Tribal members about Wells Fargo's business practices made it a good time to reassess the relationship.

"We are being prudent as an organization," Leno said. "Whether it's banking or investments or consulting, to go out every three to five years to make sure that you are re-examining your relationship with your business partners and you make sure your (deal) is still competitive in the market. That's what we're doing."

One of the most visible reasons, and one of the reasons why Meyer asked Tribal Council about Wells Fargo, is the bank's support through investment funding of En-

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Tribal Government Day



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Youth Council member Izaiah Fisher, left, tells Oregon Gov. Kate Brown about his cedar bow tie after she asked about it during Tribal Government Day held at the State Capitol building in Salem on Thursday, Feb. 9.

Youth Council members meet governor at annual event

By Bethany Bea

Smoke Signals Intern

SALEM — Ben Souede, general counsel to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, met his potential future boss during Tribal Government Day held on Thursday, Feb. 9.

During a tour of the State Capitol building, Grand Ronde Youth Council member Izaiah Fisher

met Souede and shook his hand.

"In a few years, I'm pretty sure you're going to see me in the governor's spot," Fisher said.

The annual event is a chance for Oregon's Tribes to make intergovernmental connections and educate legislators and the public about who they are. This year, five Youth Council members shadowed Grand Ronde

Tribal Council members during the event and toured the Capitol building.

"It's very exciting to have our Youth Council here today," said Tribal Council member Tonya Gleason-Shepek. "This is an important day for Oregon on build-

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Second phase construction begins at Chachalu



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

By Brent Merrill

Smoke Signals staff writer

The planned Phase II construction and expansion project for the Tribe's Chachalu Museum & Cultural Center is underway and the building will be closed to visitors until the project's completion.

According to the project plan, the Cultural Resources Department staff housed in the building, which used to be the home of Grand Ronde Elementary School and then Willamina Middle School before the Tribe purchased the building

in 2011, will remain and be temporarily located into alternate office spaces. Staff members' phone extensions will remain the same so that people can get in touch with them through normal channels.

"As far as I'm aware this is the only capital improvement project in the 2017 budget," said Tribal member and Cultural Resources Department Manager David Harrelson. "It was needed

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Tribal Cultural Collections Coordinator Veronica Montano removes baskets from an exhibit at Chachalu Museum & Cultural Center in Grand Ronde on Friday, Feb. 10, in preparation for construction of Phase II of the center.