



2012 – The second annual Salmon Celebration began in the rain at the Tribal fish weir. At the start of the ceremony, Travis Mercier welcomed “our relatives home for the year.” Toward the end of the dinner program in the Tribal gym, he encouraged more than 100 guests to save the remains from their salmon



2012 File photo

for return to Agency Creek, effectively thanking the fish by putting nutrients back into the water. Greg Archuleta and Jordan Mercier built an alder fire in the rain and prepared the ceremonial salmon.

2007 – Tribal Elder and key Restoration figure Jackie Whisler was honored at a celebration of life in the Tribal gym. Whisler, 56, passed away after a long battle with cancer. Her son, Doug Colton, remembered his mother leading Cub Scout groups, helping with Little League and making chocolate chip cookies. He also recalled the many long days and nights his mother spent working on Restoration efforts in the 1970s and early 1980s. “She was always saying it would pay off in the long run,” he recalled.

2002 – Bill Pierce, interim Spirit Mountain Casino chief executive officer, was profiled. The Cherokee Tribal member grew up in Willamina, joined the Marine Corps after high school and then Oregon State Police. When Tribal gaming was established in 1995, he was assigned to auditing all eight Tribal casinos. After working in various capacities for the Tribe after retiring from police work, he was named interim CEO at the casino. “We appreciate the fact that he grew up in this part of the country,” Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said.

1997 – Tribal youth Luhui Whitebear was honored for her volunteer work with a \$5,000 gift at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. She was feted for her service on the Oregon Native Youth Council, serving as president of the Native Youth Club at her high school, coordinating a youth empowerment conference, establishing a weekly tutoring program, visiting incarcerated Native youth and promoting the value of education.

1992 – The Tribe was actively pursuing two grants with the goal of obtaining funds for future operations of Spirit Mountain Development Fund. “The end result ... prosperity for the Tribe,” a *Smoke Signals* article stated. It also noted two possible business ventures in the research stages. “The research is timely but important for determining areas of concentration for future SMDC projects.”

1987 – The Tribe hosted its annual Christmas Party at Grand Ronde Elementary School. Santa Claus was set to make a special appearance and a bazaar was held with proceeds benefiting the Tribe’s annual powwow. Parents were reminded to keep a watch over their children during the meal to avoid injuries and property damage.

Yesteryears is a look back at Tribal history in five-year increments through the pages of Smoke Signals.

Food Bank provides boxes, seeks help

The Grand Ronde Food Bank – iskam məkʰmək haws – is operated by Marion-Polk Food Share, which has been leading the fight to end hunger since 1987 because no one should be hungry.

Recipients of SNAP, TANF, SSI or LIHEAP assistance automatically qualify for assistance at the Grand Ronde Food Bank, 9675 Grand Ronde Road. No one will be turned away in need of a food box.

“We believe that everyone deserves to have enough to eat,” Food Bank Coordinator Francene Ambrose says. “You are welcome to get a food box at each of our regular weekly distributions. No one will be turned away in need of a food box.”

Upcoming food box distribution dates will be:

- 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15;
- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 22 (holiday box distribution).

The Food Bank will be closed the week of Dec. 25-29 in observance of the Christmas holiday and re-open on Friday, Jan. 5.

Those who are unable to pick up a food box can fill out an authorized representative form and that person can pick up a food box on your behalf. The authorization is good for one year.

The Food Bank continues to seek volunteers to help with repacking food, putting food on the shelves, handing out food boxes and end-of-month inventory.

Call to ensure someone is available to assist. People also can sign up for a monthly e-mail for the Food Bank calendar and events, as well as follow the Food Bank on Facebook.

The Food Bank is an equal opportunity provider.

Call Ambrose at 503-879-3663 or contact her at fambrose@marionpolkfoodshare.org for more information or to volunteer. ■

Clothes Closet open Friday mornings

The Clothes Closet is open from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the first and third Fridays of the month and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. all other Fridays on the Tribal campus near the Elders Activity Center at the end of Blacktail Drive.

The Clothes Closet accepts clothing, small appliances, small pieces of furniture, electronics and household goods that are clean and in good condition. It does not accept books, large TVs or large furniture, but there is a community board where people can post those items.

Donations are accepted during regular business hours.

For more information or emergency clothes, contact Lori Walker-Hernandez at 559-847-7565. ■