

General Council briefed on Tribal Lands Department

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

For the first time ever, the Tribe has taken land outside of Yamhill, Polk and Tillamook counties into trust with the 97-acre Rattlesnake Butte property in Lane County recently being approved, Tribal Lands Manager Jan Michael Reibach said during a presentation given at the Sunday, Dec. 3, General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center.

"It's historic for the Tribe," Reibach said during his 20-minute presentation.

Trust land cannot be sold or transferred to non-Native Americans and can benefit from federal programs for business development, housing, environmental and cultural protection.

The General Council meeting started at 10 a.m. to accommodate the Tribal Council Christmas Party, which partially ran simultaneously at the Tribal gym.

Reibach started his presentation by outlining the mission of the Tribal Lands Department, which is to support the Tribe in “exercising its sovereignty by identifying, acquiring, protecting, restoring and managing Tribal lands and resources throughout the Tribe’s ceded lands and other areas of interest.”

The four-person Lands Department staff has myriad responsibilities, Reibach said, from monitoring the Portland Harbor Superfund site cleanup to land acquisition to self-governance to participation in the Northwest Power & Conservation Council. The latter entity is charged with implementing the Bonneville Power Administration's Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program, which provides funds to

purchase a minimum of 16,880 acres during a 15-year period through 2025 to mitigate the resource losses caused by the construction, inundation and operation of federal dams on the Columbia River.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has acquired five properties totaling 1,124 acres through the program and works to protect the properties in perpetuity for fish and wildlife conservation.

Reibach said a 97-acre parcel in Yamhill County, called K'anawi, has been approved for Bonneville Power Administration funding and two other properties are either in due diligence or proposed in Linn and Polk counties.

A new responsibility for the Lands Department, Reibach said, is self-governance, which allows Tribes to use federal funding to meet local community service needs and Tribally driven priorities. In 2018, the Grand Ronde Tribe will receive a record \$2.778 million in self-governance funds from the Department of the Interior, he said.

Other highlights included Reibach announcing that the Tribe purchased the 69-acre Rowell Creek timberland property southeast of Spirit Mountain Casino in 2017, as well as the 3.3-acre Johnson allotment – Russ Leno’s old house – in Grand Ronde.

Reibach said the timber harvesting on the Rowell Creek property eventually will pay for its purchase.

Reibach added that two of his four



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Lands Department Manager Jan Michael Reibach gives the membership an update on his department during the General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center on Sunday, Dec. 3.

departmental employees are totally grant funded through the Portland Harbor Cleanup effort and the Bonneville Power Administration.

Reibach said that he attempted to keep his presentation brief because he made a presentation in May that outlined the properties the Tribe owns. Tribally owned properties reach from the old Multnomah Greyhound Park in Wood Village

to Kilchis Point near Bay City in
Tillamook County to Rattlesnake
Butte near Junction City.

After his presentation, Reibach fielded three questions and comments from Tribal members in attendance.

In other General Council action, nominations for four open seats on the Elders Committee were accepted. Elders Diana George, Louise Coulson, Cherie Butler, Serena Layman and Linda Brandon were nominated.

Voting for the Elders Committee will occur at the late December birthday meeting to be held at the Elders Activity Center and during the next General Council meeting scheduled for 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 7.

Bob Duncan, Veronica Gaston and Alton Butler won the \$100 door prizes and Michael Wiggs, Cherie Butler, Sydney Clark, Blair Harvey and Julie Duncan won the \$50 door prizes. Arlettia Krehbiel won a donated necklace.

Reibach and Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George performed the cultural drumming and singing to open the meeting.

The meeting can be viewed in its entirety by visiting www.grandronde.org and clicking on the News tab and then Video. ■

It's a wrap



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Senior Miss Grand Ronde Isabelle Grout, left, and Tiny Tot Jameson Turner wrap a present during Grand Ronde Royalty's Christmas and Wrapping Party held in the Governance Center on Monday, Dec. 11. The presents are for children who had a tag on the Community Tree of Giving, which helps local families that are in need this holiday season. Royalty Coordinator Chelsea Clark said Royalty members wrapped 23 presents during the party.

Sewing class participants wanted

The sewing classes that have been held at the Elders Activity Center have been canceled due to lack of participation. Classes could resume if at least six people commit to attending. To commit or find out more information, contact Elders Activity Assistant Dan Ham at 503-879-2233. ■

Fee assistance

Enrolled Tribal members can request assistance with test fees (i.e. GRE, SAT, LSAT, ACT) and admissions application fees. Contact Higher Education for more information at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2275. ■



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