

Casino float ready to 'play' during Grand Floral Parade

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Spirit Mountain Casino Sponsorship Administrator Jocelyn Huffman is coy and vague when asked about the casino's float entry in the 4.2-mile Grand Floral Parade being held Saturday, June 9, in downtown Portland.

"It's about the Tribe's love of nature and Oregon," she says, resisting follow-up attempts for more details. "What I can say is it is themed around the love of wildlife."

The theme of this year's Grand Floral Parade is "play happy," which, Huffman says, was inspired by the Portland Thorns winning the 2017 National Women's Soccer League championship, as well as Portland resident Shalane Flanagan winning the 2017 New York City marathon.

The Tribe's float – always the first out of Memorial Coliseum – was designed by Portland-based SCI 3.2, which provided the casino with several design concepts and the final choice was picked internally. SCI has built every casino float for the last 22 years.

Spirit Mountain Casino is in the second year of its second three-year sponsorship deal with the Grand Floral Parade. Huffman said that the parade sponsorship promotes the Grand Ronde Tribe's primary economic enterprise and is perhaps even more important now that the Cowlitz Tribe has opened its Ilani casino 16 miles north of Portland.

"The marketing and advertising benefits are phenomenal," Huffman says. "But it's also just a great platform to tell the Tribe's story."

This year marks the 111th year of the Rose Festival and the 106th time the parade has been held. Because of war and construction issues over the years, the parade has not always been held.

The casino also was involved in the Rose Festival kickoff event held Friday, May 25, with casino chefs preparing food for people to sample at the Portland waterfront.

In addition, the Rose Festival

If you go
Spirit Mountain Casino Grand Floral Parade
When: 10 a.m. Saturday, June 9
Where: Memorial Coliseum down Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to downtown Portland ending at Lincoln High School
Grand marshal: Diesel, an English mastiff in honor of the Oregon Humane Society.
Admission: Indoor: \$30 reserved and \$15 supersaver; Outdoor: \$30 reserved chairs, \$25 reserved bleachers
More info: www.rosefestival.org

Court was in Grand Ronde on Tuesday, May 29, visiting the Elders Activity Center and achaf-hammi, the Tribal plankhouse.

Tribal Royalty will participate in the Starlight Parade being held 9 p.m. Saturday, June 2, in downtown Portland and Tribal Royalty and Veterans Royalty will accompany the casino float when it exits Memorial Coliseum and starts the route through downtown Portland on June 9.

The casino also is recruiting employees and community members to travel to Portland on Wednesday and Thursday, June 6-7, to put the final decorating touches on the casino's float. Those interested in participating should contact Huffman at 503-879-3054 by Friday, June 1.

Last year's float, "Persistence of Culture," won the Governor's Award for the best depiction of life in Oregon.

Will the casino sign up for another three-year sponsorship?

"We'll probably start those discussions soon after this year because there is still 1.5 years left on the contract," Huffman says. "But it's something we're very happy with. You really couldn't buy this much publicity for what we pay." ■



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Senior Miss Grand Ronde Isabelle Grout, left, and Rose Festival Court Princess Madison Nieuwendorp do "The Blue Heron Song" dance along with other royalty and Rose Festival Court princesses at achaf-hammi during the 2018 Rose Festival Court visit to Grand Ronde on Tuesday, May 29. After eating lunch and watching the Tribe's 25th Restoration video at the Elders Activity Center, the princesses visited achaf-hammi for a Tribal history from Tribal Cultural Education Coordinator Jordan Mercier and Tribal Cultural Advisor Bobby Mercier, as well as singing and dancing. Grand Ronde Royalty and Veterans Royalty greeted the princesses on their arrival to the Elders Activity Center and spent the rest of the day with them. Nieuwendorp is a senior at Roosevelt High School.



Rose Festival Court princesses Kash'Imani Thomas, left, and Anna Kien look at Senior Miss Grand Ronde Isabelle Grout's crown during the 2018 Rose Festival Court visit to Grand Ronde on Tuesday, May 29. Thomas is senior at Jefferson High School and Kien is a senior at Wilson High School.

Human Resources is NOW Recruiting for Powwow Employees

Accepting Veterans Powwow applications until July 5 and Contest Powwow applications until Aug. 15
 Interested candidates can apply online at www.grandronde.org
 just click on the employment page

Ad created by George Valdez

Grand Ronde Food & Fuel Company
 Fuel Attendants, Cashiers and Food Service Workers needed
 Pay rate: \$10.10 hr.
 Availability: Must be able to work weekends, holidays and graveyard shift

go to www.grandronde.org/employment to download an application or request application from CTGR Human Resources at 503-879-2109

Ad created by George Valdez