



Photo by Auburn Logan

During the Community Input meeting held at the Tribal gym on Wednesday, June 13, Emergency Management Assistant Brandy Bishop, back left, and Emergency Operations Coordinator Steve Warden explained guidance and safety surveys that are used when preparing for emergency situations.

Community Input meeting attracts 50

By Danielle Frost

Smoke Signals staff writer

Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight has heard several interesting suggestions during his time in law enforcement.

The annual Community Input meeting was no exception.

“People definitely tell us what they think we are doing right and what we can improve on,” he said. “It’s a good thing.”

McKnight’s department was one of several represented at the event, held in the Tribal gym on Wednesday, June 13. It attracted approximately 50 people in addition to 30 staff members.

McKnight said the most interesting suggestion he’d received that evening had been to put a detox unit at the Tribal Police Station on Grand Ronde Road.

He explained to the person making the suggestion that intoxicated people are not arrested unless they are committing a crime while under the influence.

“This is a good opportunity to get to know the community members and chat one-on-one about what we do,” McKnight said. “It is kind of similar to the ‘Chat With the Chief’ roundtables we have at the station.”

The evening began with an invocation by Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George before a dinner of chicken, pulled pork, vegetables, rice, macaroni salad and cookies.

Tribal Council members Kathleen George, Brenda Tuomi and Michael Langley also attended.

Tribal Emergency Operations Coordinator Steve Warden talked with attendees about one of his favorite topics — emergency preparedness.

“It’s important to be ready and this gives us a chance to talk about that,” he said. “It’s important to

have a two-week supply of everything so that if a major catastrophe happens, you’re ready.”

The event was organized by Planning and Grants Development Manager Kim Rogers, who said the main focus of the evening was to review current projects and programs, take suggestions for improvements, and use input for strategic planning.

“This is an opportunity to collect input from the community on all of our programs,” he said. “Over the years, what we have found works best is to do an open house format with different tables people can visit.”

Departments represented included Tribal Police, Emergency Management, Housing, Education, Recreation, Natural Resources, Geographic Information Systems, Planning and Grants Development, Cultural Resources, Tribal Court, Social Services, Tribal Employment Rights Office, Employment, Food Bank, Behavioral Health and the Health & Wellness Center.

The future of the Tribe’s transportation plan has been a topic of discussion recently and meeting attendees’ suggestions included adding a new route to Dallas, more round trips during the day, creating a new local service loop in Grand Ronde and late night trips.

Tribal Elder Claudia Leno was attending for the first time.

“I was hungry,” she joked.

Leno added that she had seen photos from previous events and decided to see what was going on.

“There are some good things going on here and I wish more people had come,” she said. “My input is that I wish there were more things to do here for kids. That has always been an issue. I’d like to see more youth involved.” ■

Former Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg walks on at 84

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

William Joseph “Wink” Soderberg, who served two terms on Tribal Council from 2005 to 2011, walked on Monday, June 25, at the age of 84.

Soderberg was born Dec. 29, 1933, to William Joseph Soderberg Jr. and Clarinda Maxine Quenelle.

According to a 2017 Elders Features that appeared in *Smoke Signals*, Soderberg was raised in his Grand Ronde Reservation home that did not have running water and the family’s outhouse was a 50-yard sprint away in the middle of the night or winter cold.

He was raised by his mother on his grandfather’s dairy farm that is now home to the Grand Ronde Water Association office on Highway 18 east of Spirit Mountain Casino. His grandparents were Fabian Frank Quenelle and Matilda “Tillie” Winslow.

His father bestowed his nickname on him — a name he used throughout his life.

His mother, who was a nurse and popular barber in Grand Ronde, sent Wink and his older brother, Arthur Francois Soderberg, to boarding school in Mount Angel, which is where he met his wife of 61 years, Kathleen Patricia Hauth. They wed on Oct. 20, 1956.

They had three sons, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Soderberg served in the Navy from 1951-54 during the Korean War era on two different ships in the Caribbean Sea. After being discharged, he worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 26 years and then had several businesses that involved sales.

Soderberg said a discussion he had with key Restoration figure Marvin Kimsey, who walked on March 4, 2018, prompted him to drive from his Lake Oswego home with his wife to attend every meeting held by the Tribe



Wink Soderberg

during the effort to be restored to federal recognition in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Eventually, he and Kathy returned to Grand Ronde to be closer to Kimsey and his late wife, Michelle.

Soderberg received 367 votes in the 2005 election and was re-elected in 2008 with 377 votes. During both elections, he joined former Tribal Council members Kathleen Tom and Reyn Leno in winning seats.

While serving on Tribal Council, Soderberg and current Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier would often joke about which of them was the most handsome man on the Tribe’s governing body.

After leaving Tribal Council, Soderberg served on the Tribal Employee Rights Ordinance Commission.

He is survived by his wife, Kathy, of Grand Ronde; and sons, Steven Soderberg and his wife, Ronee, of Grand Ronde; Gary Soderberg and his wife, Jean, of Alaska; and William Joseph Soderberg III and his partner, Dave, of Seattle. He was preceded in death by his brother, Arthur Francois Soderberg, who walked on in 2007.

Dallas Mortuary Tribute Center is helping the family with arrangements. Services will be held at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, June 30, in the Tribal gym, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. ■



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