

Former Tribal Council member Bob Mercier walks on at age 75

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Robert Joseph “Bob” Mercier, who served two terms on Tribal Council from 1989-92 and 1997 to 2000, walked on Sunday, Sept. 23, at the age of 75 in Willamina.

Mercier was born July 14, 1943, to Joe and Blandine Mercier and lived his entire life in the Grand Ronde and Willamina area.

Besides serving on Tribal Council, he served the Tribe on the Spirit Mountain Development Board of Directors and Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. Board of Directors, and was a longtime member of the Tribe’s Timber Committee.

During his first term on Tribal Council, Mercier worked with fellow Tribal Council members to plan and construct the Tribe’s Health & Wellness Center, as well as establish endowment funds for health, housing and education.

Mercier spent most of his life in the timber industry, working for Taylor Lumber and Siletz Trucking Co. before becoming self-employed and running his own contract log hauling business, Bob Mercier Trucking, in 1985.

He ran for Tribal Council seven times, being elected in 1989 and 1997. His last run occurred in 2003, when he finished ninth in a field of 15 candidates.



Bob Mercier

“I believe there will be many changes and challenges in the future for our Tribe,” he said in his 2003 candidate statement.

“We need to keep doing the things we feel are necessary and important, but we must always be looking at the things we can do better, too. Two the areas we must continue to direct our attention to are Elders and children.”

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Gayle Mercier; daughter, Tresa Mercier; grandchildren, Ali, Keiffer and Zoey Holsclaw; and great-grandchildren, Aurora, Austin, Red Sky, Laila, Jack and Kailiyah, all residing in the Willamina and Sheridan area.

A celebration of life, arranged by Dallas Mortuary Tribute Center, was held Saturday, Sept. 29, in the Tribal gym followed by a meal in the Elders Activity Center, 48940 Blacktail Drive.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the American Diabetes Foundation in care of the mortuary at 287 S.W. Washington St., Dallas, OR 97338, or www.dallastrIBUTE.com. ■

Carolina on her mind



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier, left, and Tribal Council member Jack Giffen Jr., right, presented a Tribal Pendleton blanket to photojournalist Michelle Alaimo on her last day of work at the Tribe on Friday, Sept. 14. Alaimo started working for *Smoke Signals* in March 2008. During her tenure with the Tribe, she won 14 awards for her work from the Native American Journalists Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. She moved to South Carolina to be closer to her parents and take over ownership of a pet-sitting business.

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 Virginia Kimsey-Roof at 503-879-2233. ■

George elected chair of environmental commission



Kathleen George

KLAMATH FALLS – Tribal Council member Kathleen George was elected chairwoman of the Oregon Environmental Quality Commission during its Sept. 13-14 meeting held in Klamath Falls.

The commission is a five-member body appointed by Oregon’s governor that oversees the state Department of Environmental Quality.

George was elected by a 4-0 vote; she abstained.

George was appointed to the commission by Gov. Kate Brown and confirmed by the Oregon Senate in a 24-5 vote in May 2017. In her role as chair, George is responsible for the operations of commission meetings and serves as the presiding commissioner for meetings or other commission events. ■

Adult Members’ Trust and Minors’ Custodial & Rabbi Trust Funds

Investments in the Adult Members’ Trust Fund and the Minors’ Custodial and Rabbi Trust Funds are updated each business day.

If you are a trust participant and/or if you are the parent/guardian of a minor member, you can access and review your balance and your minor child’s balance by visiting www.401Save.com.

To log-in, the initial User ID is your (or your child’s) Social Security number, and the initial Password is “00” followed by your (or your child’s) membership number. Once logged in, you can customize your User ID and password for security purposes. If you have any trouble logging in to or using the system, contact the 401Save Call Center at 1-888-700-0808 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific time, Monday through Friday. ■




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