

# Exploring the past

## Portland sessions teach how to trace genealogy

By Danielle Frost  
Smoke Signals staff writer

PORTLAND — Family is a huge part of Tribal life. But for some, adoption, moving away or a simple lack of knowledge about the past has resulted in unfamiliarity with individual family ties.

A workshop at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's Portland Area Office held on Tuesday, Nov. 13, helped those who were interested in learning more about Tribal culture and its ties to their past.

The all-day event was planned by Tribal Services Representative Lisa Archuleta and Tribal Elder and artisan Greg Archuleta.

Tribal genealogist Josephine Ingraham was the guest speaker.

"We're excited about this and to have Josephine here," Lisa Archuleta said. "We've never done anything like this before and thought it would be fun to try something new. We've had Greg's classes before and open houses, but thought this might be a fun way to get people in the area to come to the office."

Greg Archuleta thought of the idea of a family history activity after attending a workshop at Clackamas Community College last spring.

"I focused on the history of my family at Willamette Falls and created a video," he said. "The idea behind it is that we all have these connections. I want people to become more knowledgeable about the Tribe's history and culture. A lot of members know some of it,



Photo by Danielle Frost

**Tribal Services Representative Lisa Archuleta, left, and Tribal genealogist Josephine Ingraham peruse information about creating family trees during a workshop about Tribal family history held at the Portland Area Office on Tuesday, Nov. 13.**

but not all. I hope people become familiar with their family trees and the Tribal members they are connected to."

After a short video featuring Greg Archuleta, Cultural Advisor Bobby Mercier and Cultural Education Coordinator Jordan Mercier, attendees heard from Ingraham.

Genealogy has been a passion for Ingraham since the mid-1980s when she was hosting a garage sale and a customer told her she knew her family in Grand Ronde.

"I told her, 'I don't have any family in Grand Ronde.' She told me, 'Yes, you do,'" Ingraham recalls.

Intrigued, Ingraham began researching her family.

family.

"Everyone will have different stories for you," Ingraham said. "You really want to get the whole family involved if possible so they can carry it on later."

She added that census data, especially taken before 1910, isn't very accurate when it comes to Native Americans.

"When the census takers came, a lot of times Native people would pretend not to speak English so they wouldn't have to answer any questions because that was the era when kids were taken from their homes so they were afraid," she said.

Tribal Elder Marilyn Portwood attended with her spouse, Richard Portwood.

"It sounded really interesting," she said. "When I was growing up, people didn't talk a lot about their Tribal history so they could blend in."

Tribal Elder Debi Anderson decided to attend out of curiosity.

"It sounds like a really interesting and fun event," she said. "It's nice to do this with families who still live in the area."

Ingraham also discussed creative family tree making, how to get children interested in the process and dealing with potentially shocking information.

"Be proud," she said. "You are who you are, no matter who or what your parents, grandparents or you ancestors were."

Another workshop on family history will be offered from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 3, at the Portland Area Office, 4445 S.W. Barbur Blvd., Suite 101.

Food and snacks will be provided. Attendees are asked to bring family photos if possible. RSVP to Lisa Archuleta at 503-879-1881. ■

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