

Casino in the final year of its second three-year sponsorship

FLOAT continued from front page

at the casino and I said, ‘What is current right now, today, that we could reflect?’ Of course, it was the falls and the fishing.”

Sticking within the \$70,000 budget for the float, Bobb created a design that reflects the Native American tradition of fishing at the falls.

Spirit Mountain Casino is in the final year of its second three-year sponsorship deal with the Grand Floral Parade. Casino Sponsorship Administrator Jocelyn Huffman said that the parade sponsorship continues to promote the Grand Ronde Tribe’s primary economic enterprise and is important now that the Cowlitz Tribe opened Ilani north of Portland.

“The marketing and advertising benefits are phenomenal,” Huffman said previously. “But it’s also just a great platform to tell the Tribe’s story.”

This year marks the 112th year of the Rose Festival and the 107th time the parade has been held. Because of war and construction issues over the years, the parade has not always been held. It is the 24th year that the casino has participated in the Rose Festival, Huffman said.

The Rose Festival Court made its annual visit to Grand Ronde on Thursday, May 9, stopping off at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center and achaf-hammi, the Tribal plankhouse.

Tribal Royalty will participate in the Starlight Parade being held 9 p.m. Saturday, June 1, 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 8.

The casino also is recruiting employees and community members to travel to Portland on Wednesday and Thursday, June 5-6, to put the final decorating touches on the casino’s float. Those interested in participating should contact Huffman at 503-879-3054.

Last year’s float, “Nature’s Playground,” won the Roseboro Award for the most artistic design and presentation.

“We’re thrilled to be back and again telling the Tribe’s story,” Huffman said. “The design tells a story that we can tell throughout the three-week festival. It’s something going on in the Portland area that reflects that our people have been there since time immemorial. It was kind of a perfect fit for our float design.” ■

The job hunter

Herron heads to Vietnam to teach English

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Editorial Board member Monty Herron became the ninth Grand Ronde Tribal member to live overseas on Tuesday, May 21, when he boarded a plane in Seattle bound for Vietnam.

Herron, 46, accepted a position teaching English at a language school in the Mekong delta city of Vinh Long, which has a population of about 150,000.

Herron is now the Tribal member who is the sixth farthest away from Grand Ronde.

Two Tribal members live in western Australia, two live in Qatar and one lives in the United Arab Emirates, which are all farther away than the approximately 7,500 miles between Grand Ronde and Vinh Long.

Herron said he decided to accept the position in Vietnam after a series of unfulfilling jobs he has worked at since graduating from and teaching at Portland State University. During his last job, which involved making potato chips, he injured his hand and now has a permanent partial disability.

The teaching position in Vietnam is for one year, with a four-month escape clause for either himself or employer in case it does not work out.

Herron said he found out about the teaching position from a close friend who found him English teaching positions in either Japan or Vietnam with the latter position paying better.

Herron started preparing for the move about a month ago, including getting vaccinations for numerous diseases. He already possessed a passport.

“It’s been a whirlwind,” he said.

Herron does not speak Vietnamese, but was told that should not be a problem.

“They said, ‘You’re here to teach English, not learn Vietnamese,’” he said. “There is a huge push there to learn English.”

Herron’s job will include teaching



Timothy J. Gonzalez/Smoke Signals file photo

Editorial Board member Monty Herron speaks at the General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center on Dec 2, 2018. Herron, 46, accepted a position in Vietnam teaching English at a language school in the Mekong delta city of Vinh Long.

English to elementary school-aged children in the mornings and then teaching high school-aged students and adults in the evenings.

Herron said he is looking forward to the adventure, from trying the cuisine to adapting to the heat and humidity of Southeast Asia.

“I’m a big fan of pho,” he said. “I’m excited for the adventure. I want to go teach again because teaching is what I am really passionate about. I just wish I could take the people I love with me. That’s the rough part.”

Herron also plans on keeping up his responsibilities as an Editorial Board member, participating in meetings through Skype despite the 14-hour time difference. Herron has been a board member since June 2017.

“It is my hope since I was just reappointed and it would be a bad deal for me to bail,” he said. “I was one of the people who pushed for us possibly having a member at-large on our board because I think it speaks to us really serving our mission of serving Tribal members everywhere.” ■

MISSING

Missing And Taken Indigenous People

Leneisha (Eko/Echo) Whitefeather
Missing 4-19-19
Olympia WA

Age 21 - Dark Brown Hair
Brown Eyes - 150/180 lbs
5' 2" Tall - Large birthmark on left hand

Eko does not have a vehicle and frequents the downtown Olympia area. Was last seen in Olympia or Nisqually area.

This is a Nisqually Tribe missing persons case. If seen, or you know where Eko is, call Thurston County dispatch (360) 704-2740 Nisqually Tribe Police case# 1900235

Source: Family & Thurston County Dispatch (5-26-19)

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