

Years of Service awards honor 78 employees

By Danielle Frost
Smoke Signals staff writer

Seventy-eight employees were honored on Thursday, June 13, for a combined 1,034 years of service to the Grand Ronde Tribe during a lunchtime taco feed held in the Tribal gym.

Eighteen employees were honored for serving 20 or more years, led by Lead Groundskeeper Gregg Leno, who hit the 31-year mark. He is only the second Tribal employee ever to achieve this status along with Health & Wellness Business Manager Tresa Mercier.

Other employees who have reached or surpassed two decades of Tribal service include Housing Department Maintenance Coordinator Lonnie Leno, 29 years; Member Services Benefits Administrator Liz Leno, 27 years; Housing Department Manager Shonn Leno, 25 years; Dental Director Eric Webster, 24 years; Human Resources Specialist Cindy Mitchell and Fish and Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen, 23 years; Tribal Court Administrator Angela Fasana, Tribal Council Senior Administrative Assistant Lauri Smith



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Dental Assistant Tammy Baird hugs Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. after being recognized for five years of service during the second quarter employee recognition event held in the Tribal gym on Thursday, June 13. Baird was one of 78 employees honored during the event.

and Information Systems Operations Manager William Kephart, 22 years; Children & Family Services Supervisor Kristi Petite, Gaming Commission Executive Assistant Kathy Doane, Senior Staff Attorney Deneen Aubertin Keller, Human

Resources Training Specialist Vickie Hernandez and Preschool Teacher Toni Lockwood, 21 years; and Publications Production Specialist Justin Phillips, Community Health Driver Arnie Moralez and Senior Network Administrator Jack Dobiash, 20 years.

The ceremony honored employees hired in the second quarter of the year between April and June.

The Chinuk Wawa Immersion Program students performed the play “Coyote and Turkey Buzzard” before an invocation by Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr.

Council members Lisa Leno, Michael Langley, Denise Harvey, Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy and Secretary Jon A. George also attended.

Bobb, Langley, Kennedy, Leno and Harvey also shook employees’ hands as they received their Years of Service awards.

Employees were treated to a lunch of tacos, fajitas, cookies and brownies. Kennedy thanked them for their service to the Tribe.

“What a wonderful crowd we have here today,” she said. “I really appreciate all of your work. This is truly a family. Thank you for your work, dedication and paying attention to the details.”

Kennedy also thanked employees for all of their effort in helping the Tribe work toward purchasing property at Willamette Falls.

Before the event, all employees were invited to spend the morning participating in a community clean-up at different sites around Grand Ronde. All staff were excused with administrative leave at the conclusion of the recognition awards for the remainder of the day.

Other employees honored were:

18 years: General Manager David Fullerton, Controller Amy Gallant and Lands Department Project Administrator Brandy Humphreys.

17 years: 477/Employment and Training Specialist Christopher Martin and Instructional Assistant Roxanne Moniz.

16 years: Applications Administrator Candice Olsen, Silviculture and Fire Protection Manager Colby Drake and Gaming Inspector Kary Turner.

15 years: Cultural Resources

Department Manager David Harrelson, Children & Family Services Intake Specialist Donna Johnson and Family Services Coordinator Audra Sherwood.

14 years: Medical Receptionist Tina Leno and Early Head Start Teacher Jessica Cruickshank.

13 years: Housing Maintenance Technician Randy Bean, Gaming Commission Assistant Director Tanner Fish, Health Information Technician Leanna Norwood, Silviculture/Fire Protection Technician Jeremy Ojua, Adult Foster Care Caregiver Anna Huston and Early Head Start Home-Based Visitor Shelley Clift.

12 years: Adult Foster Care Caregiver Carmen Parren, Cultural Center Specialist Rachelle Kellogg and Gaming Commission Licensing Specialist Tisha Pellett.

11 years: Gaming Commission Executive Director Michael Boyce, Chinuk Language Program Manager Ali Holsclaw, Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Michael Cherry and Gaming Commission Background Investigator Nicholas Bailey

10 years: Adult Foster Care Caregiver Ardyth Hoffer-Hallicola, Certified Medical Assistant Dana Seagrove, Head Start Teacher/Education Coordinator Kristina Jaquith, Fire Supervisor Jim Pinder and Swing Shift Housekeeper Stacey Runningbird.

9 years: Wildlife Biologist Lindsay Belonga, Realty Specialist Teresa Brocksen, Dentist Erin Lange, Health Promotion Specialist Tammy Leno, Chachalu Manager Julie Brown and TERO Compliance Officer Duke Kimsey.

8 years: Rental Housing Assistant Michele Plummer, Youth Programs Assistant Shannon Stanton, Native Connections Coordinator Amber Mercier and Patient Account Specialist Loretta Meneley.

7 years: Vocational Rehabilitation Administrative Assistant Rhonda Leno, Youth Education Program Manager Tim Barry, Dental Secretary Carrie Brooks, Public Affairs Administrative Assistant Chelsea Baranski, Groundskeeper Brady Bruckner, Chinuk Immersion Teacher Justine Flynn, Gaming Commission Receptionist Kristina Summers, Early Childhood Education Program Assistant Denae Towner, K-5 Tutor/Adviser Kyla McCallister and Budget Manager DeAnne Norton.

6 years: Adult Foster Care Caregiver Brianna Leno, Tribal Police Officer Ron Wellborn and Historic Preservation Technician Nicolas Atanacio.

5 years: Dental Assistant Tammy Baird, Pharmacy Technician Randi Keyser-Crocker, Grand Ronde Police Lt. Tim Hernandez, Program Accountant Michael Hubbard, Pharmacy Technician Tawna Norwest and Staff Attorney Holly Partridge.

Employees received bonus checks and those reaching the 10-year mark in service had the option of receiving a Tribal Pendleton blanket or an extra \$100 in their bonus check. ■

Float decorating



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal member Renee Norcross joins Spirit Mountain Casino employees in decorating the casino float for the Rose Festival Parade in Portland on Wednesday, June 5. The theme for this year's float is “Keeping Culture Alive at Willamette Falls.”



Tribal member and Spirit Mountain Casino Sponsorship Administrator Jocelyn Huffman joins Tribal members and Spirit Mountain Casino employees in decorating the casino's float for the Rose Festival Parade in Portland on Wednesday, June 5.

