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AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE · SMOKE SIGNALS.ORG

Coronavirus concerns prompt postponements

**Tribe to reschedule
Round Dance, limits
employee air travel**

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Growing concerns nationwide about the spread of the coronavirus have reached the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

On Wednesday, March 11, the Tribe announced postponement of the April 3-4 Agency Creek Round

Dance and the upcoming Native Wellness Day. The announcement coincided with Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's announcement that she will be prohibiting events larger than 250 people for four weeks to help combat the spread of the virus.

"The Tribe's Round Dance planning committee has made the decision to postpone our April gathering," Communications Director Sara Thompson said. "This decision stems from our desire to protect the health and safety of our people, our visitors that travel and our guests in attendance. We plan to resched-

ule this event for a later date and will update everyone on the details when they are available. We will keep you all in our good thoughts."

Although the Yamhill County Health Department does not think there is an imminent threat of a novel coronavirus outbreak in the area despite neighboring counties reporting cases, the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Clinic has been developing a response to a possible outbreak.

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Photo by Dean Rhodes

Signs posted at the entrance of the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center ask patients who think they might have contracted the novel coronavirus to call ahead instead of entering the facility and possibly infecting other people.

Tribal flags raised



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Youth Council Chairwoman Isabelle Grout carries the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde flag during the Tribal Flag Raising Ceremony held at Chemeketa Community College in Salem on Friday, March 6. The flags from the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon will be on permanent display in the Student Center to let Native American students know that they belong on campus, and to help students and staff recognize Oregon's Native American history.

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Showcasing sovereign nations

**Legislative Information
Day provides an opportunity
for Tribes to tell their stories**

By Danielle Frost
Smoke Signals staff writer

SALEM – Tribal Legislative Information Day at the State Capitol continues to be well-attended despite cautionary travel restrictions in response to the spread of the novel coronavirus in Oregon.

Held Thursday, March 5, at the Capitol Galleria, this year's theme was "Working Together."

The high turnout was good news to Mitch Sparks, the new Legislative Commission on Indian Services executive director. This year marked his first organizing the annual event.

"The attendance today is pretty good," said Sparks (Oglala Lakota Nation). "We've had excellent turnout from our governmental offices and legislative offices."

Held at the State Capitol in Salem, Legislative Information Day provides an opportunity for Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes to highlight who they are and what makes Tribal governments different from the various special interest groups and stakeholders with whom legislators and state agencies mostly interact.

During the four hours the Tribes were at the Capitol Galleria, a steady stream of advocates, Capitol staff, agency directors and staff, legislators and staff, lobbyists and members of the public visited the tables. The only notable difference at this year's event was the use of "elbow bumps" and air handshakes instead of the usual handshake, along with copious containers of hand sanitizer.

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