



Drive-through graduates — pg. 9

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SMOKE SIGNALS

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Spirit Mountain Casino re-opens



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Spirit Mountain Casino joined at least four other Oregon and southwestern Washington Tribal casinos when it re-opened on Monday, June 1, ending 2.5 months of being closed because of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

The casino, the Tribe's principal economic engine, opened its doors at 6 a.m. and implemented additional safety measures to protect guests and staff members, such as age restrictions of not allowing anyone under the age of 21 on the

casino or Spirit Mountain Lodge properties, requiring masks at all table games and "strongly" encouraging all guests to wear casino-provided masks, temperature scanning at the entrances and additional hand sanitizer and sanitizer wipe dispensers throughout the property.

In addition, hours will be limited to 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and 6 a.m. to 4 a.m. Friday and Saturday to allow for additional deep cleaning.

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Spirit Mountain Casino's sign along Salmon River Highway touts the re-opening of the casino at 6 a.m. Monday, June 1. The casino has been closed for 74 days because of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Tribal Council OKs several more rounds of virus relief payments

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Adult Tribal members will see a series of three virus relief payments totaling \$1,800 over the summer.

Tribal Council instructed the Finance Department on Wednesday, May 27, to prepare a third supplemental budget that will allocate \$8.1 million that the Tribe received in federal funding to fund the virus relief payments.

The approximately 4,500 adult Tribal members will each receive \$600 at the end of June, July and August, according to a May 27 post on the Tribal government's Facebook page.

The funding comes from the Tribe's share of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act monies. Although the Tribe has not disclosed exactly how much it has received in CARES Act funding, a Harvard study estimates it at being approximately \$33 million based on the U.S. Treasury's announced

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Memorial Day flyover

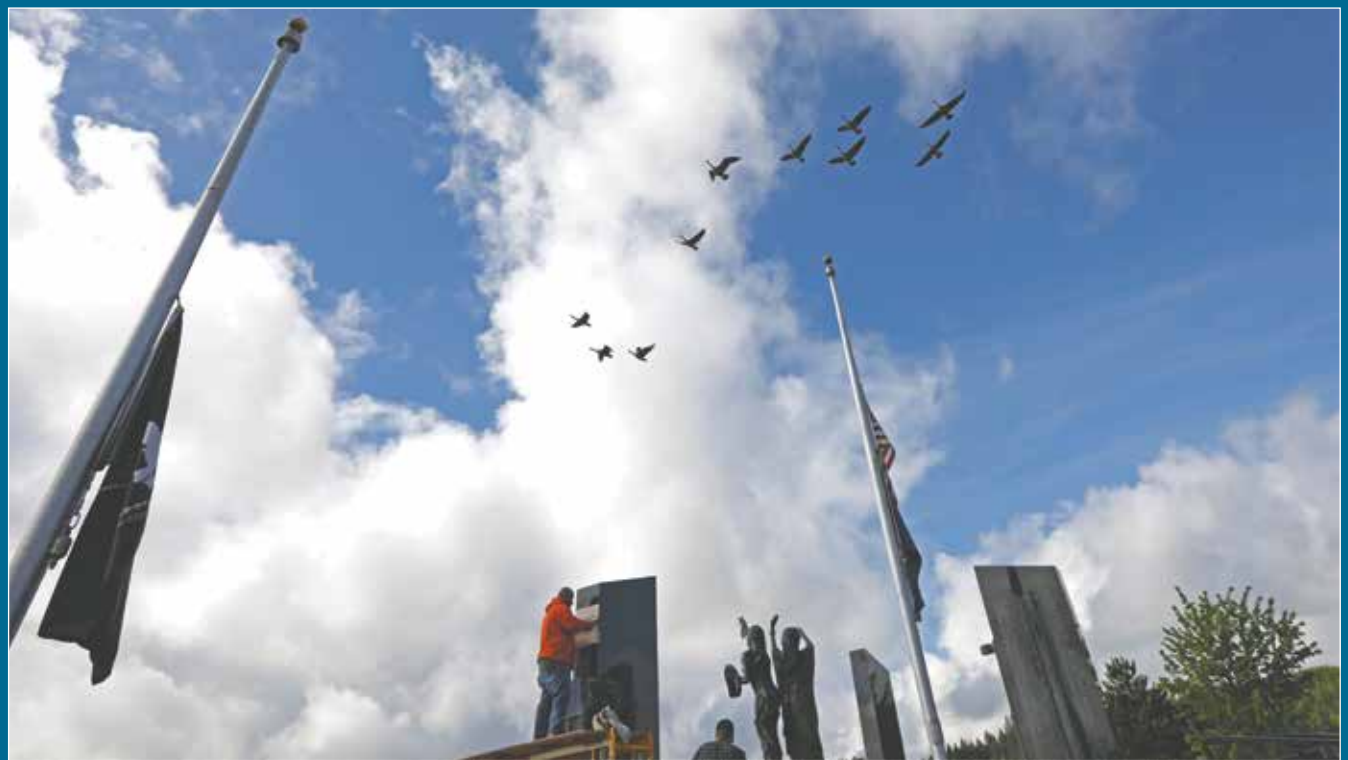


Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Canada geese perform a flyover of the West Valley Veterans Memorial as Cemetery Service Technician Greg Gnos with OM Stone works on etching new names on Friday, May 15. Army veterans Douglas D. Stake, Alden H. Clark, Linden W. Frederic, Donald E. Holsclaw, David W. Weaver and Mervin J. Holmes and Navy veterans James F. Marks and Ramona L. Quenelle were added to the memorial. To hear Quenelle, a Grand Ronde Tribal employee, discuss her service in the Navy, visit www.spreaker.com and search for "Smoke Signals podcasts." For more photos see page 7.

Tribal employees adjust to 'new normal'

By Danielle Frost

Smoke Signals staff writer

From temperature checks to wearing masks, working at the Grand Ronde Tribal government has fundamentally changed in the wake of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

When the Tribe's approximately 500 employees returned to work after a two-month partial closure, the differences were readily apparent.

The first new requirement was to line up at designated locations on the Tribal campus for COVID-19 screening questions and a temperature check. Employees are required to carry "pass" slips if leaving the building so they can be readmitted. Entry to non-employees is by appointment only.

Chachalu Museum & Cultural Center is closed to visitors until future notice. Cultural activi-

ties are being posted to YouTube so that those interested can still participate, albeit remotely.

Additionally, the Tribe's popular Khofi Haws stand is closed until future notice. TERO Director Harris Reibach sent out an all-employee e-mail regarding the closure.

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