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Tribe begins administering COVID-19 vaccine

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde started administering the highly anticipated COVID-19 vaccine just before Christmas.

Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe said the Tribe's Health & Wellness Center received 200 doses of the recently approved Moderna vaccine on Tuesday, Dec. 22.

"I am very happy to say we received the first allotment of the Moderna vaccine and we are starting to vaccinate clinic personnel, Tribal first responders, then adult foster care workers



and residents, so we can start getting some herd immunity built up," she said.

As of 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 23, approximately 20 essential health care workers at the Tribe had received their first dose of the vaccine,

including Rowe.

"I had mine this morning and had no side effects," Rowe said.

She said that only 20 doses would be administered per day in case side effects resulted in essential clinic personnel having to stay home sick.

"We don't want to potentially have an entire department out," she said. "We have identified staff who want the vaccine as priority and working toward the ones who are 'maybes' and then

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Tribe received \$45 million in CARES Act funding in '20

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde received more than \$45 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funding in 2020, according to the federal government website www.usaspending.gov.

The Tribe received a combined \$44 million from the Treasury Department in three payments and \$1.56 million from the Department of the Interior.

The Tribe used approximately 42 percent of that emergency funding — \$19.3 million — to fund a COVID-19 Relief Payment program that sent a total of \$4,400 to each adult Tribal member in eight monthly payments from April through November.

The relief payments approved on March 18 were designed to help Tribal members adversely affected by the nationwide economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of quarterly per capita payments in June and September after Spirit Mountain Casino closed for 74 days from mid-March through May 31.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has presented everyone with challenges that we couldn't anticipate," Tribal Communications Director Sara Thompson said. "The CARES Act funding has helped us provide for our Tribal members, students, community and staff during a year

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Welcome to the Hotel Willamina



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal member Matt Haller stands outside of the Wildwood Hotel and Restaurant in Willamina on Tuesday, Dec. 15. Haller and his wife, April, purchased the hotel and restaurant in October. The restaurant is currently takeout only, but the hotel's six rooms are available.

Tribal member Matt Haller purchases Wildwood and restaurant

Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

WILLAMINA — After being shuttered for almost six months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Wildwood Hotel and adjoining restaurant are open for business, albeit with limited services for the time being.

The hotel and restaurant were purchased by

Grand Ronde Tribal member Matt Haller, 37, and his wife, April, who are also lifelong West Valley residents.

"The previous owners (Meredith and Katie Kendall) made it possible for us to purchase this," Haller

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