

Pictures with Santa



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Anwyl Norwest, 5, receives a package from Veronica Gaston dressed as a Minion as his father, Brett, looks on after having his picture taken with Santa, aka Tribal member Aaron Anderson, near the Grand Ronde apartments on Thursday, Dec. 17. Santa sat in the sleigh to allow for appropriately socially distanced photos during the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was organized by Khanamakwst Committee.



Hannah Nice and her son, Benson Knight, 3, have their picture taken with Santa, aka Tribal member Aaron Anderson, and a reindeer, aka Spirit Mountain Casino laundry attendant Matthew Sweet.

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mæk mæk Mania still cooking virtually

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

Like pretty much everything else in 2020, a popular Tribal food and culture event moved to an online format this year.

mæk mæk Mania, which highlights and celebrates food services and resources in the Grand Ronde and West Valley communities, was held via the video conferencing app Zoom on Thursday, Dec. 17.

mæk mæk Mania is typically held in early fall, but was rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is co-sponsored by the Grand Ronde Food Bank (iskam mæk^hmæk haws) and Marion-Polk Food Share.

The virtual event featured different speakers, recipes and presentations by Marion-Polk Food Share, the Oregon State University Extension Service, Food Hero, Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers and 4-H programs, as well as Tribal Youth Empowerment & Prevention and the Natural Resources Department Native Plant Propagation program.

Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier hosted the event, which has been held four times in the Tribal gym and averaged 80 to 100 people in attendance. Food-related vendors and service providers set up informational tables, conduct cooking demonstrations and provide food to attendees.

“We’ve been hosting events like these and having community conversations regularly,” Mercier said. “This normally is held at our gym, and our goal is to raise awareness of food issues and food access. What I have learned is I didn’t know the depth of the resources that are available. Some of the people who have come to us, I had no idea of what they did or the services they offered.”

One of the pre-recorded videos featured Youth Prevention Coordinator and Youth Council Adviser



Smoke Signals screenshot

Youth Prevention Coordinator Shannon Stanton gives a demonstration on how to make her Three Sisters Stew during the virtual mæk mæk Mania held on Thursday, Dec. 17. The event was hosted by Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier.

Shannon Stanton and Native Connections Coordinator Amber Mercier discussing a new Tribal Youth Empowerment and Prevention program, “Cooking with Shannon.” They also hosted a cooking demonstration of Three Sisters Stew.

At the conclusion of the online event, Mercier thanked participants and attendees.

“I know it’s not the same as having it in the gym and with all of the tables, but this was our attempt to make up for it,” he said.

Several food- and cooking-related raffle prize drawings were given away during the event. To view the video of the event in its entirety, visit [youtube/q6KueqaSU4A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6KueqaSU4A). ■

Availability of ODOT STIF Transit Grant Funds

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is providing notice that the Tribe is reviewing options for their application (or STIF Plan) for ODOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Funds (STIF), which is due Feb. 1, 2021. The Tribe is eligible for \$100,000 a year from this fund for use with public transit. On Tuesday, Jan. 12, the Tribe’s STIF Advisory Committee will meet to review options and make its recommendation to Tribal Council. The meeting will be by telephone between noon and 1 p.m. The public is invited to attend by calling in.

Last year Tribal staff and the Advisory Committee recommended creating a new public transit route between Grand Ronde and the city of Dallas and creating local collector/circulator service within the immediate Grand Ronde area. That was approved by Tribal Council and submitted. The Tribe anticipates continuing with that plan this year as well but is accepting other suggestions for options.

It is expected that the Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde will vote on adopting the Tribe’s STIF Plan on the uses of these funds at its meeting on Jan. 27, 2021, at the Governance Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

Contact Kim Rogers at 503-879-2250, kim.rogers@grandronde.org for more information including the call-in number and participant code. Meeting materials will be available for public review by Jan. 7 and can be e-mailed. ■

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