



Tribe shares vision for Blue Heron site — pg. 5



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Tribe fighting efforts to rewrite history of Falls

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is once again rebutting claims by Columbia Plateau Tribes, particularly the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, regarding historical usage of the Willamette Falls fishery by Native American Tribes.

In November 2020, the Umatilla Tribe sent Gov. Kate Brown and other officials a document titled “Traditional Use Study of Willamette Falls and the Lower Columbia River by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation” in that Tribe’s efforts to get Grand Ronde to dismantle its ceremonial fishing platform and prevent it from exercising its cultural practices at the falls.

In response, the Grand Ronde Tribe once again turned to Dr. Stephen Dow Beckham, who wrote a 205-page analysis of the Umatilla document.

Beckham’s assessment said that the Umatilla study is filled with errors of fact, faulty conclusions based on misunderstanding of primary and secondary sources, and accepting as “truth” virtually anything that is in print.

“In sum, CTUIR’s study is intellectually dishonest,” Beckham said.

Beckham, a professor emeritus of history at Lewis & Clark College, had previously prepared a 160-page report commissioned by the Grand Ronde Tribe in 2018 that rebutted assertions by the Columbia Plateau Tribes that their ancestors also

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Dunk shots

Tribe records 13 assists, vaccinates most Trail Blazers

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals staff writer

The Portland Trail Blazers had 13 of their 15 players vaccinated on Monday, March 22, at the Tribal gym, using some of the extra vaccine supply from the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

The Trail Blazers posted news of the team vaccination efforts to its various social media channels and website that same morning, and players also posted pictures to their social media accounts on Twitter.

“Today, 13 Trail Blazers players received their first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine,” the team said. “Access to this excess supply of vaccines was through the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde who began offering the vaccine to the general public in February as a way to help Oregon and the nation move past the pandemic.”

“The Trail Blazers organization and players are grateful to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde for making these vaccines available to the general public. ... Players were excited and enthusiastic about getting their first dose. It all went very smoothly.”

The statement encouraged others to get vaccinated as well.

“As vaccination efforts continue to ramp up, we will continue to use our platform via public service announcements and other messaging to raise



Photo courtesy of Twitter

Portland Trail Blazers forward Robert Covington posted a photo of himself getting the first dose of the two-dose Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at the Tribal gym on Monday, March 22, to his personal Twitter account. The Tribe vaccinated 13 members of Portland’s professional basketball team, using some of its excess supply of vaccines.

awareness on the safety, efficacy and importance of vaccination so our state and communities can come out of this awful pandemic as soon as possible.”

Center Enes Kanter posted a selfie of himself getting vacci-

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Revitalizing Chinuk Wawa during a pandemic

Zoey Holsclaw, 25, is a post-elementary Chinuk Wawa teacher and Grand Ronde Language Department outreach coordinator. She sits outside her office building on the Grand Ronde Tribal campus on March 12.

Photo by Kamiah Koch



(Editor’s note: This story was originally produced as part of a collaboration between the Native American Journalists Association and NPR’s Next Generation Radio.)

By Kamiah Koch
Smoke Signals social media/digital journalist

As a young Grand Ronde Tribal member, Zoey Holsclaw learned storytelling happens from the first frost until the frogs sing.

Wintertime was when activity would slow and the Elders of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde could share their

stories and history in Chinuk Wawa, their Native language.

“I love speaking the language, and part of why I want to teach people to speak in Chinuk Wawa is because we don’t have that many speakers right now,” Holsclaw

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