

Tribal member Gene LaBonte launches outdoor business — pg. 8



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Tribe starts enrollment community meetings

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde held the first of four scheduled informational meetings regarding membership and enrollment issues on Wednesday, May 26.

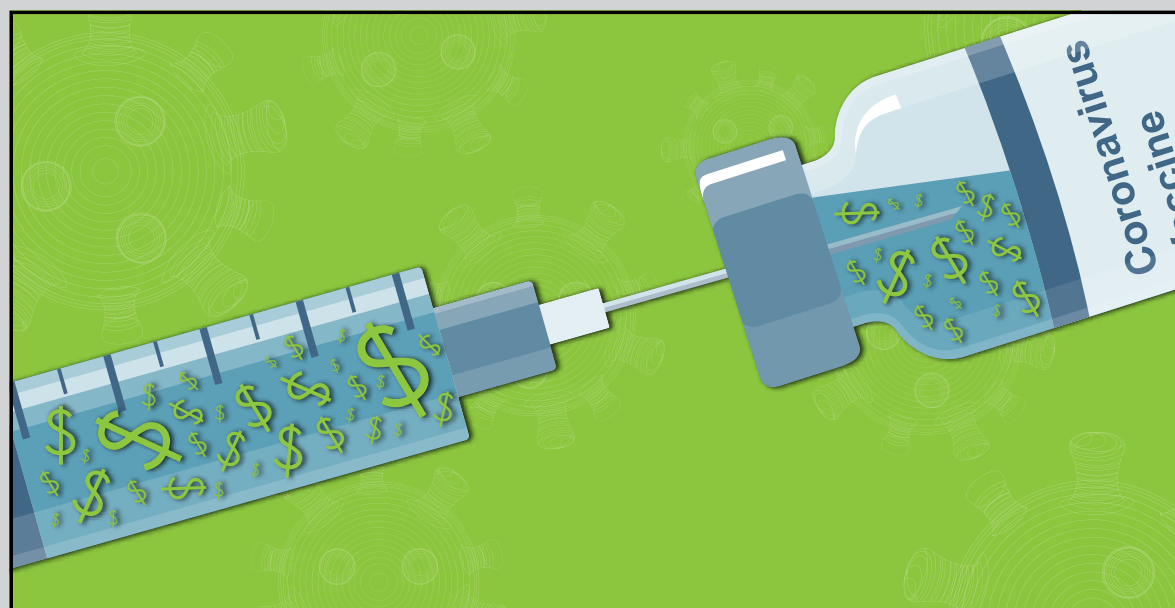
Because of continuing COVID-19 pandemic concerns, it was held virtually using the Zoom teleconference application and attracted more than 130 Tribal members. Originally scheduled for two hours, the meeting lasted two hours and 45 minutes as Tribal members recounted their family stories of enrollment injustice during the question-and-comment period.

“It shows me that there is great interest about our enrollment and concern as well,” Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said about the attendance. She then cited a litany of problems that have affected the Tribe’s membership records that were inherited from the federal government upon being restored in 1983 after 29 years of Termination, including incorrect information in files handed over by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“What is known is that most Tribal families have a problem with enrollment. ... The problem is invasive,” she said.

In addition to Kennedy, Tribal Council members Steve Bobb Sr., Jack Giffen Jr., Jon A. George, Denise Harvey, Lisa Leno, Michael Langley and Kathleen George attended the meeting.

See MEETINGS continued on page 11



Graphic by Samuel Briggs III

The money shot?

Grand Ronde vaccinations entered into state lottery drawing

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

More than 20,000 people who have received their COVID-19 vaccinations through the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have gotten more than immunity against the coronavirus.

They now have a chance – albeit minute – to win a lot of money.

On Friday, May 21, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced a COVID-19 vaccine lot-

tery to combat slowing vaccination rates.

The “Take Your Shot Oregon” campaign will automatically enter every Oregonian age 12 and older who gets at least one shot by June 27 into the lottery.

A June 28 drawing will give adults 18 and older the chance to win one \$1 million prize and 36 \$10,000 prizes (one in each county).

See MONEY continued page 3

Tribal government playing it safe with mask rules

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

The Grand Ronde Tribal government will not be changing its mask-wearing rules for vaccinated employees following the Thursday, May 13, announcement by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that said vaccinated Americans no longer need to wear masks in most situations.

“Throughout this pandemic, CTGR has erred on the side of keeping people safe,” General Manager David Fullerton said in an e-mail to all employees. “Moving forward, we will continue with those same precautions. CTGR will continue to require masks for all employees.”

See MASKS continued on page 7



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Tribal employees are still required to wear masks upon entering the Governance Center in Grand Ronde even if they have been vaccinated against the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Council incumbents seeking re-election

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council incumbents Cheryle A. Kennedy, Jon A. George and Steve Bobb Sr. have all confirmed to *Smoke Signals* that they plan to seek re-election during the Sept. 11 Tribal Council election.

Kennedy, 73, is the longest serving Tribal Council member in Grand Ronde history. She will be seeking her eighth consecutive three-year term on Tribal Council.

During the 2018 election, Kennedy set a record for the most votes received by a Tribal Council candidate at the time with 712 votes. That record was surpassed in 2020 when Lisa Leno received more than 1,000 votes and Chris Mercier and Michael Langley

both received more than 900 votes.

Kennedy has served as Tribal Council chair for 15 years, including the last four years.

George, 60, is the current Tribal Council secretary and will be seeking his fourth consecutive three-year term on Tribal Council. During the 2018 election, he finished second to Kennedy. He has served as Tribal Council secretary for the last five years.

Bobb, 72, served two terms on Tribal Council between 2007 and '13 and was re-elected to a third term in 2018, garnering 606 votes. He will be seeking his fourth three-year term on Tribal Council.

Tribal Council nominations will occur at 11 a.m. Sunday, June 27. The location and in-person attendance rules have yet to be released. ■