



Watchlist: ‘Why Treaties Matter’

By Kamiah Koch

Social media/digital journalist

Most Native people have heard there are hundreds of treaties signed between Native nations and the United States. Most Native people know these treaties relinquished Native people’s land rights and resource holdings for the right to preserve their way of life.

National Public Radio published a video just before Thanksgiving in 2017 suggesting most non-Native people may know there were treaties signed, but that’s about it.

“Why Treaties Matter” is a short video of Native descendants, professors and Tribal leaders answering these common questions: “What is a treaty?”, “Why treaties were signed?” and “What do treaties do?”

The latter half of the video elaborates on treaties being the “supreme law of the land” and how they still hold relevance today, although they are often disregarded.

“A lot of people lack an understanding that wherever they live, there is probably a treaty that gives them the right to live there, granted to them by Native nations,” said Jill Doerfler, a White Earth Anishinaabe descendant and associate professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota Duluth said.

This five-minute video is a resource for understanding Native treaties, but Jodi Archambault Gillette, a former President Obama advisor from the Hunkpapa/Oglala Lakota and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, states in the video that there is a need for more extensive curriculum that accurately reflects what a treaty is, historically and today.

Gillette expresses dissatisfaction in the fact that the U.S. Constitution and the three branches of government are being taught in schools, yet education on Native treaties does not carry the same weight.

“Treaties are living documents because Tribes continue to breathe life into them,” Gillette says at the end of the video. “We continue to speak their terms. We continue to remember their promises.”

To watch and share NPR’s “Why Treaties Matter” video, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bexvE41ZRG0>.

For more *Smoke Signals* Watchlist videos, see our playlist at www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLksqwWZ-PgAT6RhZ58Scyw_GYkKuN-fvNG ■



Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

After a short break, masks are once again required by all guests in Spirit Mountain Casino as of Thursday, May 27.

Mask mandate for all casino guests reinstated on May 27

MASKS continued from front page

The Centers for Disease Control said that Americans who have been vaccinated and are beyond the two weeks following their final dose no longer need to wear masks in most indoor and outdoor situations. Exceptions were made for public transportation, prisons and jails, health care facilities and for teachers and students.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown quickly followed the announcement of new federal guidance regarding wearing masks on Thursday, announcing the state would follow those same rules.

“Going forward, fully vaccinated individuals in Oregon will generally not have to wear masks or practice physical distancing indoors or outdoors, with exceptions,” said Brown’s spokesperson Charles Boyle.

The Grand Ronde Tribal government has been in a State of Emergency since March 18, 2020. The resolution allows Fullerton to oversee the Tribal response to the coronavirus pandemic and use Tribal resources to respond to and recover from its effects.

The Tribal government is currently in its third phase of re-open-

ing after a three-week pause that began in mid-April following an uptick in COVID-19 cases in the West Valley. The increase in cases also forced the Willamina School District to suspend in-person instruction for a week.

Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe cited spring break and Easter activities for the increase in COVID-19 cases.

Spirit Mountain Casino continued to require employees and guests who have not been vaccinated to wear masks, but started allowing vaccinated guests to enter mask-less. The casino removed the “masks required” signs it had erected along Highway 18.

An emergency meeting of the Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. Board of Directors was held on Friday, May 21, and Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr., who sits on the board, said at the Tuesday, May 25, Legislative Action Committee hearing that the mask mandate for all casino guests was reinstated on Thursday, May 27.

In addition, the casino has started announcing a series of outdoor concerts on its website beginning with George Thorogood & the Destroyers on July 31 followed by Tesla, ZZ Top and The Oakridge Boys. ■



The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Tribal Veterans Service Office and the Veterans Affairs Office of Tribal Government Relations presents

Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

A Virtual Training

June 8, 2021, at 2 to 3:30 p.m.

To register, email CTGR Tribal VSO at CTGR Tribal VSO@GrandRonde.Org

Presented by, Sarah Súñiga, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist and the Women Veterans Program Manager for the Veterans Affairs. Dr. Súñiga serves as an advocate for women Veterans and works to improve the delivery of health care services. She has previously served in the Army Reserves and deployed to Afghanistan in 2012-13. Sarah has worked at VAPORHCS since 2006 as a psychologist with the PTSD Clinical team.

A clinical psychologist like Dr. Sarah Súñiga assesses, diagnoses and treats mental, emotional and behavioral disorders. Clinical psychologists help people deal with problems ranging from short-term personal issues to severe, chronic conditions. Clinical psychologists interview patients, give diagnostic tests, provide psychotherapy and design behavior modification programs to help patients.

For more information please contact the CTGR Tribal VSO - Ramona Quenelle at (503) 879-1484

Clothes Closet open Friday mornings during summer

The Clothes Closet is open from 9 a.m. to noon Fridays during the summer on the Tribal campus near the Elders Activity Center at the end of Blacktail Drive. The Clothes Closet accepts clothing, small appliances, small pieces of furniture, electronics and household goods that are clean and in good condition. It does not accept books, large TVs or furniture, but there is a community board where people can post those items. For more information or emergency clothes, contact Lori Walker-Hernandez at 559-847-7565. ■