

IN THE FUTURE



tałlam-mun (October)

- Sunday, Oct. 3 – General Council meeting, 11 a.m., Zoom teleconferencing application. 503-879-2304.
- Monday, Oct. 11 – Tribal offices closed in observance of Indigenous Peoples' Day.
- Wednesday, Oct. 13 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.
- Saturday, Oct. 16 – 26th anniversary of the opening of Spirit Mountain Casino.
- Wednesday, Oct. 27 – Tribal Council meeting, 4 p.m., Tribal Council Chambers, 9615 Grand Ronde Road. 503-879-2304.

(Editor's note: All events are tentative depending on the status of the Tribe's COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic response.)

Salem seeking Tribal input on Climate Action Plan

SALEM – The city of Salem is preparing a Climate Action Plan and specifically seeking the input of Grand Ronde Tribal members who have respected and managed the land in the Willamette Valley since time immemorial.

The Climate Action Plan's goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a resilient community. A majority of Salem's greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation at about 53 percent. Many actions in the plan are focused on reducing those emissions by expanding and supporting public transportation, building an electric vehicle charging network, and improving biking and walking options.

To provide input on the proposed actions and any new suggestions, visit salemclimateactionplan.com and leave comments. ■

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Grand Ronde Social Services Department:

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Grand Ronde Food Bank:

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Spirit Mountain Community Fund:

facebook.com/SpiritMountainCommunityFund

Grand Ronde Cultural Education:

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Grand Ronde Community Garden:

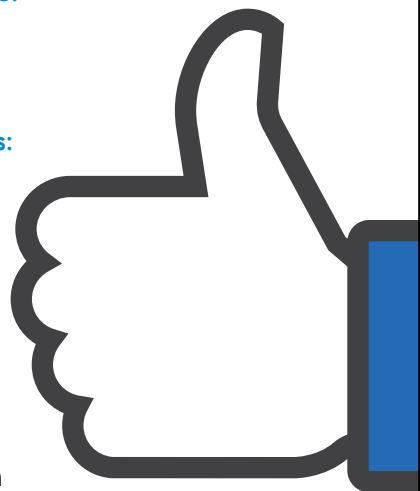
facebook.com/GrandRondeCommunityGarden

Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department:

facebook.com/Grand-Ronde-Tribal-Police-Department

Grand Ronde Employment Services

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Ad by Samuel Briggs III

Government continues limited office access due to COVID cases

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Due to a continuing increase of COVID-19 cases in the West Valley and among its workforce, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde government will continue its re-opening pause that started in early August through at least Friday, Oct. 1.

According to the Tribal government website www.grandronde.org, there are 57 active cases of COVID-19 being monitored by the Health & Wellness Center as of Wednesday, Sept. 29, and 17 new cases detected. The website also says the Tribe has recorded 200 positive COVID-19 tests and 3,134 negatives for an increasing positivity rate of 6 percent. The Tribe has vaccinated more than 20,900 people in 2021.

In addition, the Willamina School District previously reported it has 25 students who have tested positive for COVID-19 and 57 students who are in quarantine because of exposure.

"I believe the increase in positive COVID-19 infections in the West Valley is mostly attributed to the increased contagion of the Delta variant," Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe said.

The government-opening pause started on Tuesday, Aug. 3, closing the governmental campus to everyone but essential employees due to an increase in COVID-19 cases. It was the first COVID-related closure in almost three months.

"We all want to put this behind us, but the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over," General Manager David Fullerton said. "Practice social distancing, wash your hands and wear a mask. Let's work together to get past this."

Employees are encouraged to work from home if possible. Staff not able to work remotely have been given administrative leave. Beginning Sept. 7, Central Phones staff returned to the campus to assist callers who need to reach

specific employees working from home. The campus remains closed to visitors and guests, and essential employees who report to work are required to wear masks.

The increase in COVID-19 cases in the West Valley, the state and nationwide has been attributed to the Delta variant, which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said is far more contagious than the original strain, and that some vaccinated people can contract Delta in a breakthrough infection and may be contagious.

However, vaccinated individuals still represent a very small amount of transmissions, and an overwhelming majority of hospitalizations and deaths continue to be among the unvaccinated.

Willamina School District Superintendent Carrie Zimbrick said that none of the district's cases are linked to in-school transmission. All Willamina district staff must be fully vaccinated by Oct. 18 as mandated by Gov. Kate Brown.

"I had an Oregon Department of Education meeting on Tuesday and the state epidemiologist shared some staggering information," Zimbrick said. "Something I was alarmed to see is positive Delta pediatric cases among our American Indian children are disproportionate at a rate of 4 to 1 compared to their white peers."

Willamina teachers did not have students on Monday, Sept. 27, to give them time to plan for simultaneously teaching students in the classroom and those who cannot attend school because of the pandemic.

According to health experts, the best way to avoid the worst of the pandemic is to get vaccinated. All Tribal members and those who live in their households, other Native Americans and their household members, and Tribal employees and their household members 12 and older can schedule a vaccination through the Health & Wellness Center by calling 503-879-1900. ■

Massage at Health & Wellness Center

Remember: Appointments for massage are not managed by the Health & Wellness Center staff.

To schedule an appointment, call 971-237-2561. ■

Casino gift store seeking Tribal member artwork

The gift store at Spirit Mountain Casino is seeking Native American and contemporary art from Grand Ronde Tribal members as the store refocuses. However, there is one catch.

Tribal artists must first contact the Tribal Employment Rights Office to become vendors and be certified as an Indian-owned business.

"Becoming an IOB vendor is the first step in the process," said Assistant General Manager Camille Mercier. "Once they are a qualified vendor, their pieces will need to meet a predetermined list of standards in order to have any items in the gift store."

Mercier said the target date is mid-October for the gift store to start accepting consignment items from Tribal artists.

"It's been long overdue to have our own Tribal member artwork featured," she added.

To contact the Tribe's TERO office about being listed as an Indian-owned business, call TERO Director Harris Reibach at 503-879-1455 or send an e-mail to tero@grandronde.org. ■