

General Council meeting

11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 5

Tribal members can participate remotely through the Zoom application.

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, Dec. 1.....	4 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 15.....	4 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 29.....	4 p.m.

Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed.

LETTERS

Dear Smoke Signals:

Greetings and blessings to you all. I write this letter with mixed feelings, fear and anxiety, but always with love and respect for you, my people.

Some of you know a little about me. Some of you helped me over the years I spent locked up in California state prisons from Dec. 6, 1999, to June 4, 2020. Yes, I am out, but not quite free due to the strict parole I'm on.

When I paroled I got on the phone and contacted the people in the Tribe I thought could help me get my parole transferred to Grand Ronde. This was last year and the outcome wasn't good and left me feeling rejected by these people whom I see now just didn't understand how simple state-to-state transfers can be if you let parole authorities do their part and do not take on the position of authority on your own. That wasn't their job, yet that was the position they took so they denied my request to be placed in the Men's Transition House. I didn't reach out to anyone else after that rejection because honestly I was angry and deeply wounded. I had just spent nearly 22 years in prison dreaming and planning the whole time of going home.

I let it rest and went about my business having a successful parole. I'm doing great all things considered, but I could be doing much better if I were home where I belong where I have far better helpful resources and opportunities. I'm missing out on so much and at my age every day is a gift.

Most importantly, I'm missing out on being with my 80-year-old pop and building new relationships and connecting with my people.

I was isolated and alone 22 years, separated from my people and now that I'm half-free, I'm more alone than ever.

I don't think it's too much for me to ask for help getting me home. Our Tribe achieves the impossible. Bringing me home is peanuts compared to what our people have achieved. Please help me come home.

Walter F. Simmons Jr.

Roll No. 2317

MARRIAGES IN TRIBAL COURT

Tribal Court is now once again issuing marriage licenses and is able to perform marriage ceremonies for a filing fee of \$40.

For questions regarding scheduling, contact the Tribal Court at 503-879-2303. ■

Christmas Parade set for Friday, Dec. 10

The annual Grand Ronde Christmas Parade will be held at 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10, organizer Veronica Gaston announced.

Lineup will begin at 5:30 p.m. The parade will loop through Elder housing and then down Tyee Road and around the Wind River apartments before going around Raven Loop and Tilixam Circle and finally heading to Grand Meadows.

The Grand Ronde Police Department will lead the parade and be followed by Fire Department personnel and vehicles. They will be followed by decorated cars and the Christmas truck with Santa will be last.

For more information, contact Gaston at mawich69@gmail.com. ■

CORRECTION — A cutline that appeared in the Nov. 1 edition of *Smoke Signals* misidentified a man who was the first to enter the Elders Activity Center after it re-opened its doors again on Tuesday, Oct. 19, for Elders' meals. The man was Arnie Moralez. *Smoke Signals* regrets the error.

TRIBAL OFFICE CLOSURES

Tribal offices will be closing noon Thursday, Dec. 23, and all day on Friday, Dec. 24, in observance of Christmas. Offices also will be closing noon Thursday, Dec. 30, and all day on Friday, Dec. 31, in observance of New Year's Day.

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DEADLINE DATE ISSUE DATE

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 8 DEC. 15, 2021

MONDAY, DEC. 27 JAN. 1, 2022

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Our editorial policy is intended to encourage input from Tribal members and readers about stories printed in the Tribal newspaper. However, all letters received must be signed by the author, an address must be given and a phone number or e-mail address must be included for verification purposes. Full addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless requested. Letters must be 400 words or less.

smok signalz reserves the right to edit letters and to refuse letters that are determined to contain libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals, staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Letters to the editor are the opinions and views of the writer. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of **smok signalz**.



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