

Cooling off



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

From left, Issac Emery, 15, and Nacoma Liebelt, 14, have a splash fight as they cool down in Agency Creek near the day use area on the Tribal campus on Tuesday, Aug. 15. An excessive heat warning was in effect in Grand Ronde at the time and temperatures reached a high of 105 degrees on Monday, Aug. 14, breaking the previous record of 99 degrees.

SSI recipients eligible for Internet service aid

Any household with an individual receiving Supplemental Security Income is eligible to receive discounted Internet service through the Affordable Connectivity Program launched by the Federal Communications Commission. Social Security does not count Affordable Connectivity Program assistance as income or a resource for SSI purposes.

The program provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward Internet service for eligible households and \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Eligible households also can receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 toward purchasing a laptop, desktop computer or tablet from participating providers.

To enroll in the Connectivity Program, go to www.fcc.gov/asp. ■

Former Tribal employee shares Maui fire experience

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals editor

After 20-year Tribal employee Rick Andersen left his position as Treasury Manager in March 2022 he moved to Maui, a place many would consider the ultimate retirement dream.

It was, until the morning of Tuesday, Aug. 8, when the idyllic Hawaiian island was hit with the worst wildfire in more than 84 years. Since then, the Olinda fire in central Maui burned approximately 1,081 acres and the Kula fire burned an estimated 202 acres. The Lahaina fire burned approximately 2,170 acres. The fires are 85 to 90 percent contained as of press time, according to a Maui County press release.

Andersen’s neighborhood was spared but the experience was jarring. “My wife, Laurie, and I are not directly affected by the fires and we are safe,” he said in an email. “It has been devastating to the communities of Lahaina and Kula. We are about 16 miles from Lahaina (hardest hit by fire) and 20 miles from Kula (where the Kula Lodge and other businesses were lost by fire as well). We could see the smoke from where we live in Maalaea Bay. In other words, we are right in the middle of all the fires.”

He added that Maui is referred to as the “valley island” and that he lives at the south end of the valley that separates the east and west sides.

“The highway you see on CNN that is closed here in Maalaea is the Honoapillani Highway which connects West Maui to the rest of the island,” he said. “Since the police only allow property owners and hotel employees in Kaanapali to go through here, we have not been over there, nor do we intend to go.”

Andersen first began realizing something was amiss a few days before, when he began receiving high wind and red flag warning alerts on his cell phone.

“Otherwise, the weather was normal for this time of the year,” he said. “It’s really dry on the south side of Maui throughout the summer with the last measurable rain in March. The winds did start picking up on Monday (Aug. 7) and became really strong on Monday night. The peak wind speed was 82 mph in Maalaea on Tuesday. ... The strong winds didn’t die down to normal until Thursday morning.”

As of press time, there were 115 confirmed fatalities, according to the Maui Police Department website.

Travel to West Maui is discouraged through October, but travel to other parts of Maui is welcomed to keep residents employed and the economy going, as it is largely dependent on tourism, according to the website gohawaii.com.

For those who want to assist with recovery efforts, Andersen recommends the Maui Strong Fund and American Red Cross for cash donations.

“The Hawaiian Ohana is strong about their land and people just like Grand Ronde is about their land and people,” he said. “There are a lot of similarities.” ■



Rick Andersen

Women's Healing Circle

A SAFE SPACE TO COME TOGETHER AND SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER THROUGH COMMUNITY HEALING



When: Monday, Sept. 11 & 25
Time 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Where: 4445 S.W. Barbur Blvd
#101, Portland,
OR 97239



THOMPSON PRAIRIE RESTORATION STAFF SERVICE EVENT



Help prepare and seed native plant patches at the Thompson Property!

Parking: Parking will be available at Chachalu. From there it is a half mile walk to the site.

Shuttle is available for those with limited mobility. Contact Annaliese.Ramthun@grandronde.org to sign up

What to Bring:

- Water
- Clothing that can get slightly dirty and is appropriate for the temperature
- Comfortable shoes for walking
- Work gloves if you have them- we will have a limited supply available



SEPTEMBER 21ST 10:30AM-12:30PM
AFTER 3RD QUARTER SERVICE AWARDS