

Tribe honors 83 employees for 1,070 years of service

By Nicole Montesano

Smoke Signals staff writer

The Tribe took time Thursday, March 20, to honor 83 employees for a cumulative 1,070 years of service with breakfast and games at the Tribal gym.

Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy welcomed employees.

She praised employees and Tribal members for “taking care of all of our lands. Taking care of all of our rights and fighting for things yet to come. And all of the work,” noting that her own background was in health care.

“I especially look toward all the services that deliver our sovereignty,” Kennedy said. “Whether you’re a member or not, we value you. We appreciate you. ... I’m thankful we seek input from our members and our employees.”

She reminded employees of the dedication of Tribal members Margaret Provost, Merle Holmes and Marvin Kimsey in getting the Tribe’s federal recognition restored. A bronze statue of the trio is located in front of the Governance Center on campus.

“Those three had an idea and we couldn’t be stopped and we’re not stopping today,” Kennedy said.

She noted that the actions of the Trump administration have sown chaos and uncertainty, noting “they have an idea about what it means for Tribes,” but said, “rest assured” that the Tribal Council is watching closely, trying to forecast the effects of the administration’s actions and come up with responses.

“Even through the pandemic, our



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Staff Accountant Shereena Bates, right, hugs Tribal Council member Denise Harvey as she is recognized during the first quarter Years of Service awards in the Tribal gym Thursday, March 20. Bates has worked for the Tribe for nine years.



focus was on trying to keep our employees employed,” Kennedy said.

Tribal Council member Matthew Haller gave the invocation and performed a flute song. When he finished, he said, “Thank you guys; I really appreciate you.”

In addition to Kennedy and Haller, Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier and council members Denise Harvey, Brenda Tuomi and Tonya Gleason-Shepek attended.

Tribal Early Head Start Family Educator Shawn Bobb, right, shakes hands with Tribal Council member Brenda Tuomi as she is recognized during the first quarter Years of Service awards in the Tribal gym Thursday, March 20. Bobb has worked for the Tribe for 21 years.

Assistant General Manager Bryan Langley presided over the event and called out ticket numbers for attendees to participate in games. After presenting the service awards, Langley drew employee names to raffle off gifts of cash and administrative leave time.

Employees were served a breakfast of scrambled eggs, biscuits and gravy, bacon, sausage and fruit.

The following employees were recognized:

35 years: Procurement Specialist Kelly Leno.

30 years: Records Administrator Kimberly Mueller.

29 years: Licensing Program Manager Julia Papen.

27 years: Billing Supervisor Sunni Ulestad.

26 years: Clinic Business Office Manager Melody Baker.

25 years: Employee Relations Manager David DeHart and Compensation/HRIS Specialist Becky Mode.

24 years: Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Angela Sears.

23 years: Web Administrator William Mercier, Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight and Office Manager/Paralegal Kerrina Mishler.

22 years: Post-secondary Education Coordinator Joshua Clift.

21 years: Early Head Start Family Educator Shawn Bobb and Tribal Services Representative Lisa Archuleta.

19 years: Employment Specialist Toni Mercier and Staff Accountant Debra Nolen.

18 years: Employment Specialist Jessy Powley.

17 years: Construction Supervisor Bart Bryant, Housekeeper Rosie Saldivas, Health Information Supervisor Desiree Allen, Fish and Wildlife Administrator (in training) Michele Volz, Enrollment Officer Nick Labonte, Senior Dental Assis-

tant Rachel Clark and Compliance Analyst Tyrell Soderberg.

16 years: Health Care Payment Specialist Kayla Leno, Groundskeeper Joseph Grammer and Hydrosystem Compliance Specialist Lawrence Schwabe.

15 years: Lead Shipping Receiving Clerk Seth Mercier and Rental Housing Program Manager Leon Ramos.

14 years: Chinuk Wawa Preschool Teacher Halona Butler, Employment Program Manager Michael Herrin, Employee Relations Specialist Sean Barton and Dental Hygienist Erin Muchmore.

13 years: Gaming Inspector Dalten Robertson, Historic Preservation Manager Briece Edwards and Family Support Specialist Alexandria Warren-Masters.

12 years: Groundskeeper Sean Sell, Risk Analyst Patricia Mercier, Child Family Services Investigator Shauna Hastings, Employment Caseworker Angella Schultz and Employment Caseworker Tiny Gibbons.

11 years: Groundskeeper Joseph Kelley, Tribal Police Detective Tyler Brown, Patient Insurance and Eligibility Specialist Whitney Varnarsdel, Chinuk Wawa K-5 Teacher Jade Colton and AV Technician/Web Specialist Jordan Smith.

10 years: Housing Services Coordinator Lacy Leno, Tribal Police Sgt. Rod McAllister, Elder Justice Coordinator Stephanie King and Chinuk Wawa Outreach Teacher Zoey Holsclaw.

Nine years: Staff Accountant Shereena Bates, Senior Help Desk Technician Mark Donahoo, Lead Licensed Practical Nurse Jeannette Cavan, Assistant Teacher Washie Squetimkin-Anquo and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Brandy Bishop.

Eight years: Preschool Teacher Joshua Biery, Physician Randall Blome, Training Specialist Jeri St. Onge, Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor Shawna Freeman, Human Resources Specialist Jessie Storm and Firefighter Anthony Simmons.

Seven years: Senior Mental Health Counselor Denise Fellows, Member Benefits Administrator Kalene Contreras, Tribal Police Officer James Flynn, Early Head Start Family Educator Tracy Haas, Compensation/HRIS Analyst Jonathan R. George, Lab Manager Teresa Larson and Tribal Realty Specialist Amanda Wilson.

Six years: Staff Accountant Benito Rodriguez.

Five years: Victims Assistant Advocate Anne Falla, Cultural Protection Specialist Jesse Norton, Vocational Rehabilitation Trainee Trinity Sherwood, Secretary Bethany McKnight, Enrichment Coordinator Jerald Harris, Teacher Aide/Bus Monitor Maria Ramirez, Maintenance Technician Lisa M. Leno, Rental Housing Assistant Alisa Mull, Tribal Police Officer Brian Hamlin, Health & Physical Education Coach Shane A. Thomas, Academic Advisor Devon Mercier, Applications Administrator Dina Sayers and Behavioral Health Program Care Coordinator Dorothy De la Rosa. ■

Mobile Mammogram

Dotty is back!

When: Tuesday, April 22, 2025
Where: Social Services Parking Lot, CTGR Campus

Requirements:

- Must 35 years of age or older
- Must not be pregnant or have breast fed within the last 6 months
- Must be 1 year since recent mammogram
- No known/present breast lumps, discharge or breast pain

Your health. Your choice.

In 2025, an estimated 316,950 women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancers, and an additional 59,080 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed. Chances are, you know at least one person who has been personally affected by breast cancer.

Instead of dreading mammograms, let's embrace the opportunity for good health!
Appointments required, to schedule, call Community Health at 503-879-2078