Burn sets up prairie restoration

By Charles Latch

The Chehalis Tribe partnered with Pacific Northwest organizations to hold a 22-acre prescribed burn Oct. 4 on reservation land.

Natural Resources and Trust Services departments teamed up with various state ecology groups to make the cultural burn possible. Tribal community members and the Chehalis Canoe Family held a ceremony before the blaze on Balch Road’s prairie with a controlled burn crew in attendance.

Native American ancestors in the region used the cultural practice for generations prior to colonization. It restored natural resources such as camas, carrots, strawberries, blackberries and other seasonal plants important to their daily lives.

The focus of the recent prescribed burn is to restore

See BURN, page 4

Flying J truck stop opens

Tribe’s travel center delivers safety, comfort to customers

By Frazier Myer

Chehalis Tribal Enterprises is excited to invite customers to its newest business the Flying J Travel Center at Exit 99 off Interstate 5.

The Flying J opened its doors at 2725 93rd Ave. SW in Tumwater on Oct. 13. Semi-truck drivers and others in the area have quickly taken notice of the new establishment. CTE held a grand-opening ceremony on Oct. 28 to honor and bless the significant moment for future tribal prosperity.

The travel center for professional truck drivers offers amenities such as showers, washers and dryers, a visitor lounge area, Taco Bell restaurant, easy self-checkout machines, diesel and unleaded fuel and much more. The truck stop provides weigh stations and more than 70 parking spaces.

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for drivers to comfortably and safely sleep overnight. The Flying J also features 12 premium spaces for a fee. The spots have water and electricity stations truck drivers can hook up to. Anyone can reserve and use the amenities. For example, people traveling in RVs can utilize showers and laundry facilities while they relax and recover. Partnering with the Pilot Flying J company is estimated to more than double the fuel sales revenue than if the tribe operated the business alone, Chehalis Tribal Enterprises CEO David Burnett said. “Taxes are going to be the biggest impact for the tribal government,” Burnett said. The tribe’s fuel tax agreement with the state ensures 34 cents for each gallon sold comes back to the tribe in tax revenue.

A long road

Bringing the business to fruition involved a lengthy process that took nearly nine years to complete. The tribe acquired the land in 2013. Unforeseen circumstances meant breaking ground and construction were put on hold until April of this year. The Flying J officially opened six months later in October. Burnett explained that the Chehalis Tribe decided to purchase the land in 2013 and make improvements to a truck stop already on site to make that business operational. That plan was halted when the tribe attempted to place the property into reservation trust land. Tribal leaders were notified that the land had extensive contamination. The BIA required action from the tribe and the state Department of Ecology. The two parties developed a plan to clean up the site before the BIA could officially place the land from fee to trust. Burnett said the process took time because numerous steps went into cleaning the contaminated area. Crews were hired to demolish the old building and remove a mountain of dirt. The soil was hauled 50 miles south to Kelso and processed. After clean soil was placed at the site, the Department of Ecology analyzed the area, declared it safe and issued a “no further action needed” letter to the BIA. This enabled the tribe to place the land in trust and begin developing the land.

Before construction could start, the tribe first had to choose whether to operate as an independent business or partner with a major brand. Tribal leaders put a lot of consideration into the decision. In 2018, the tribe was weighing the benefits of both options, Burnett said. A brief negotiation with the Pilot Flying J company didn’t result in an agreement. Months later, the company contacted the tribe highly motivated to complete a deal.

Beneficial collaboration

CTE assessed the alternative of operating independently. That evaluation resulted in an estimate of 300,000-400,000 gallons of fuel sold each month. But by partnering with Flying J, brand recognition increased the projected volume of sales to more than 850,000 gallons a month. Collaborating with the established national company generates significantly more business. All major trucking companies are tied into contracts with specific fuel companies and must use their brand. Therefore, most truck drivers are not allowed to purchase fuel from an unbranded store. Partnering with the Pilot Flying J company will generate much more profit than if

See FLYING J, page 3
the tribe had opened the business independently.

The Flying J brand is owned and operated by the Pilot company. There is a Pilot Travel Center directly across the freeway at 2430 93rd Ave. SW, Tumwater. The Chehalis Tribe’s new establishment isn’t meant to take business from the neighboring truck stop. Both entities believe the entire area will grow and benefit all businesses located at Exit 99.

The Flying J Travel Center will ultimately increase the tribe’s net income. Burnett said in addition to profits generated from the fuel tax agreement, the business will create employment opportunities for tribal and community members.

The collaboration is also significant because it creates a working relationship between the Chehalis Tribe and Pilot Flying J. The brand donated $2,500 to Rochester and Oakville school districts. Both school superintendents were present at the travel center’s ribbon-cutting ceremony. Rochester and Oakville are the two districts that serve kids on the Chehalis Reservation.

“Overall, we’re excited to be here and partner with the tribe,” Pilot Flying J Travel Manager Eric Homer said.

He explained that the business will be a major draw because of its location on the I-5 corridor. The spot allows easy access for all guests, from professional truck drivers to those on daily errands. Truck drivers provide a vital service delivering goods and supplies to help meet day-to-day needs. Flying J is an essential stop for drivers to park, fuel up and sleep to remain in compliance with state Department of Transportation safety laws. WSDOT requires drivers rest a certain number of hours while on the road.

Boon for Tumwater

In addition to creating a financial footprint for the tribe in the Tumwater area, the Flying J will have a positive impact on more than just the tribe’s growth. It will enhance the city’s overall image.

President of the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce Gabe Toma has worked with the organization for more than five years and served as president the previous three years. He described the significance the Flying J has already had on the surrounding area.

“The establishment is a huge improvement to this area,” Toma said.

Toma highlighted that it’s important for the organization to support local businesses. An establishment of this size will create job opportunities, improve surrounding property value and provide important services to travelers and local customers.

Burnett spoke at the ceremony and wanted to express that key business opportunities were made possible by Chris Richardson, who passed away in February. Richardson was an enrolled Chehalis tribal member, managing director at CTE and a dedicated businessman. He spearheaded numerous opportunities and built partnerships with companies that helped the tribe grow in recent decades. He is deeply missed by the tribal community.

Denise Miño enjoys working with tribe

The Chehalis Tribe’s Human Resources Department is pleased to welcome Denise Miño as the new Training and Development Coordinator.

Miño previously worked at Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel as the Learning and Development Leadership Specialist for the past two years. Prior to that, she worked for the state in various roles related to training, technology, emergency management and public health.

Denise is a graduate of Tenino High School and has a bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young University. She is a graduate student at Walden University where she is studying to become an industrial and organizational psychologist with an emphasis in Human Resources Management.

Denise said she enjoys working with the tribe.

“It’s the people. I loved the people I worked with at the casino and am excited to be a part of the HR team on the tribal government side. I have lived in the area for most of my life and have some long-standing connections to the tribe,” she said.

Human Resources Director Stephanie Pickernell is excited to get the training program up and running again.

The first order of business will be to put on core competency classes, including harassment- and safety-related trainings.

Up next, Human Resources staff will create and lead a supervisory training series and provide other courses that will help strengthen the workforce.

Please watch for staff training opportunities in the near future.

RAISING BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

On Oct. 22, Chehalis tribal employees dressed in pink to show support for breast cancer survivors, honor those lost to the disease and help champion finding a cure.
the camas plant. In full bloom, it is a vibrant purple lily. The small, bulb-like root was an important food source for Chehalis and other Salish Tribes of the Northwest. Camas can be dug up from April to June. Ancestors traditionally slow-roasted the plant over an open fire for 24-48 hours until it turned brown. Heating the plant caramelizes the sugars and sweetens the camas. It was dried and stored for eating in colder months.

The plant also is considered an anti-diabetic food because it does not raise blood sugar levels. Attempts to revive the plant tribal ancestors used as a staple resource saw a major step with the controlled burn on Balch Road.

In modern times, the general population is taught to be afraid of blazes because of wildfires, which are prevalent on the West Coast and destroy hundreds of thousands of acres each year. House fires also raise fears. Chehalis people, along with other regional indigenous tribes, used fire for thousands of years as long-term prairie maintenance to provide the highest yield when cultivating seasonal harvests and storage of supplies for cold seasons. Prairies were normally burned every three to five years depending on type of harvest yield.

**Embracing tradition**

Tribes across the nation are losing part of their culture as they become assimilated to mainstream social norms and no longer practice traditional ways of the native people.

Chehalis tribal members William Thoms and Dan Penn of Trust Services spoke about the importance of the cultural burn to bring back prairie resources.

“Times are different, things are different, our needs are different, but it feels good and it feels like we are doing the best we can to honor their practice,” Penn said.

Thoms told those in attendance that the work done by Trust Services staff is more than just paperwork and going through files.

“Our real job is to find all these old traditions that have seen this lapse and do everything we can to bring them back,” Thoms said.

Community members were given the opportunity to speak about the land and significance of resources on the prairie.

“These are the things that don’t have a monetary value. This is our wealth, this is who we are,” Chehalis tribal member Glenda Comenout said.

**Extensive training**

The tribe’s Department of Natural Resources hired Prairie Technicians Farley Youckton Jr. and Sean Evangelista to train for controlled burns. Training was extensive, taking six months to complete. The technicians obtained red-card certification issued by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, giving them the ability to work on the fire line during prescribed burns.

Youckton, an enrolled Chehalis tribal member, said training included a 40-hour online class, physical fitness tests, pesticide-applicator classes, first aid classes and safety courses on how to operate a chainsaw.

All of the training doesn’t compare to the act of preforming large controlled burns. Youckton said this is the first time he put his training into practice.

“It was a new experience. It turns out grass can be really hot,” he said.

Although he understands the cultural significance the event has for the tribe, Youckton said there are dangers involved in a prescribed burn. Fire can be very unpredictable, which is why the burns are thoroughly planned and require a large crew to keep it from spreading out of control.

Though winds were mild and conditions favorable, the fire was more intense than Youckton anticipated. His safety training was put to use as the fire spread quickly. Youckton and Evangelista stayed composed and completed tasks with assistance from professional prairie restoration groups.

**Habitat enhancement**

Sarah Hamman, Director of the Science and Ecostudies Institute and co-founder of the Camas Prairie Cultural Ecosystems Collaborative, has led teams on controlled burns at numerous sites across the state. She has been a part of projects such as these for years, but this is her first time working on a tribal reservation.

Hamman said the burn is something that took years of planning and effort from various parties to develop and organize. She led the burn by instructing the tribe’s technicians and her crew of nearly two dozen professional wildfire fighters.

“It brings back the important cultural practice that has helped keep these prairies as prairies for thousands of years,” Hamman said of the importance of burns on tribal lands.

This burn will enhance the habitat of the prairie by eliminating invasive species such as Scotch broom, which has no value and is a nuisance.

Just before the start of spring, members of the tribe’s Department of Natural Resources and Hamman’s Camas Co-Lab will plant camas seeds in the area burned to develop a harvestable yield of camas for tribal members.
Innovative kit used to create new structure

By Charles Latch

The Chehalis Tribal Planning Department upgraded tribal infrastructure with installation of an innovative new bridge on the reservation. It is the only bridge of its kind west of Oklahoma and was completed in a single day.

Hovanut Road connects both sides of the reservation and serves as a popular alternative to the highway for locals commuting. The construction location was next to the Fisheries building. Brian VonCluck, Utilities Project Manager for the Chehalis Tribe, explained that the bridge was needed based on a failed annual inspection from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Community members utilized a temporary road while the old bridge was closed.

VonCluck said the bridge is unique because construction of this magnitude usually takes 18 months to complete and is typically done with box culverts. Planning and construction crews saved time and money by designing intuitive ways to complete the project using a bridge kit. Planning placed a temporary road on the site Oct. 4, demolished the bridge Oct. 11 and installed the new bridge on Oct. 22.

“This will be the future of bridges,” VonCluck said.

Transportation Planner Bryan Sanders spent the past two years working on the project. He said the bridge is expected to stand for at least 100 years and the improvements will make it much safer for everybody moving around the Chehalis Reservation. The bridge also will help protect against flood waters on the Black River during the rainy season. And it will allow residents to utilize Hovanut Road year-round.

Matt McIver brings flexible attitude to Behavioral Health

Matt McIver recently began working with the Chehalis Tribe Behavioral Health department as a mental health counselor in November. McIver is a licensed clinical social worker.

He grew up in Olympia and graduated from Capital High School in 2003. From there, he earned a degree in business administration from Washington State University. McIver worked in sales and marketing for a number of years but found that line of work unfulfilling and lacking purpose. This led to a career change. He started his career by working in schools, particularly in special education departments. He mainly worked with students who have social and emotional struggles.

He has years of experience coaching basketball, football and track. He eventually went back to school and earned his master’s in social work from Simmons College with a concentration in clinical social work. The past four years, he worked as a therapist for at-risk youth and their families. McIver specializes in cognitive and dialectical behavior therapy.

Although he has worked mainly with adolescents, he feels comfortable with clients of all ages. He describes his approach as laid back and client-centered. As a social worker, he is trained to meet clients “where they are at,” meaning he doesn’t believe in a one-size-fits-all approach or trying to put his personal agenda on a client. He believes in following the client’s lead and working together as a team to assess each individual’s needs and wants throughout treatment and adjusting interventions accordingly.

McIver and his wife recently moved back to Olympia after spending seven years on the East Coast in Boston and Maine. They have two children: 3-year-old son Caleb and 1-year-old daughter Alma. During his free time, McIver enjoys playing basketball and being in the outdoors.

He is excited to be back home in the Pacific Northwest and looks forward to being a part of the Chehalis tribal community.
**NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

**PRINCE ADAMS**  
**KEVIN ALBERT**  
**GERALD ALDRICH**  
**FRANCISA AYALA-KLATUSH**  
**JORDAN BAKER**  
**SIMON BAKER**  
**TARYN BAKER**  
**JAUNITA BILL-SANCHEZ**  
**NATHAN BOYD**  
**KENNETH “BOONER” BROWN JR.**  
**COURTNEY BROWN**  
**SIDNEY BROWN**  
**DAPHNE BURKE**  
**BOBBIE BUSH**  
**TYANNA CANALES**  
**TYSON CANALES**  
**JAYLEE CAYENNE**  
**MADELINE COLSON**  
**TANAYAH COMENOUT**  
**RANDY CORNWELL**  
**RACHELLE FERGUSON**  
**ASHLEY FERN**  
**KATY FOX**  
**CASILDA GARCIA-STARR**  
**DYLAN GLEASON-WHEELER**  
**PENNY GLEASON**  
**ORINDA GODDARD**  
**MADOLEEN GODDARD-BOYD**  
**ANTHONY GOMEZ**  
**LUCY HILL**  
**GABE HIGHEAGLE**  
**HEATHER HOYLE**  
**ENRIQUE JIMENEZ SANCHEZ**  
**ANTONIO JONES**  
**ALICE JONES**  
**WILLOW JONES**  
**BROOKLYNN KLATUSH**  
**CHRISTIBETH KLATUSH**  
**TAYLEENA KLATUSH**  
**ROACHEL LAMBRETH**  
**CYRENA LITTLESUN**  
**ATHENA LOPEZ**  
**MONIQUE LOPEZ**  
**ARIA LOPEZ**  
**JOAN MARTIN**  
**LISA MCCLOUD**  
**MICHIAH MCNAIR**  
**MAELANI OMAN**  
**ASHLEY ORTIVEZ**  
**AURORA ORTIVEZ**  
**LUCILE ORTIVEZ**  
**WAYNE ORTIVEZ**  
**TERRY PALMER**  
**SHONI PANNUK**  
**YVONNE PHILLIPS-HAUKOM**  
**VALERIE PICKERNELL**  
**DESSIRAY POPE**  
**GRACE QUILT**  
**JOSEPH REVAY SR.**  
**LINNAEA SANCHEZ**  
**LUWANNA SANCHEZ**  
**NATALIE SANCHEZ**  
**SOFIE SEKISHIRO**  
**KANE SIMMONS**  
**PAYTON SIMMONS**  
**RACHEL SIMMONS**  
**KRISTOPHER SHORTMAN**  
**ALEXIS STARR-WRIGHT**  
**AMIL STARR JR.**  
**MAYNARD STARR**  
**CARRIE SQUALLY**  
**APRIL THOMPSON**  
**KEIRA THRAILKILL**  
**LORI TOVREA**  
**MIA VIGIL**  
**RYAN WHITE**  
**JOURNEY WHITEEAGLE**  
**KYLAN WITTWER**  
**PHOENIX WITTWER**  
**CHRISTOPHER YAWN**  
**MARCUS YOUCKTON**  
**PAM YOUCKTON**

Aria Lopez: Happy 2nd birthday perfect girl. Mom and Dad love you so much!

Landon Simmons: Happy 6th birthday. We love you! Simmons family

Payton Simmons: Happy birthday to our favorite girl. We love you! Simmons family

Michah McNair: Happy birthday son. May all your wishes come true on your special day! Love Momma, Shannon, Sister and Sissy

**BELATED WISH**

Andrea Phillips: Happy birthday! Cheers to 50 years sis! Love ya, Yvonne.

Simon & Taryn Baker: Wishing both of our November babies a very happy birthday! Love Mom, Dad, Jeremiah and Laela.
Wellness Center adds space, services

Expansion improves safety procedures and offers room to grow

The Chehalis Tribal Wellness Center has a new extension to provide specific services to community members.

The addition is in the back near the tiny homes. It will provide space for COVID-19 testing and allow urgent care for patients who need to be seen quickly but don’t have life-threatening concerns. This will keep patients that are coming in for routine checkups or appointments separate from those who might have or been exposed to COVID-19. The new wing essentially will keep the community healthy and prevent the spread of a serious outbreak.

Wellness Center Director Denise Ross recognized the need to expand the building and its services for years. The tribe applied for and was granted federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act to combat COVID-19 effects and to improve its medical facility.

Ultimately, the new extension will provide safety for those who need to visit the center. Ross said that when the pandemic began in 2019, patients coming in to get tested or vaccinated for COVID-19 crossed paths with people coming in for routine checkups.

The addition provides a safe solution with all rooms built to the highest standards and designed to be modified into hospital rooms. This means it can be converted to a small overnight hospital if the tribe decides to take that route in the future.

Construction began on a fast track in October 2020. Originally on a tight deadline, funding was expanded through 2021. This allowed CTWC and those responsible for design time to thoroughly complete the project within grant funding regulations.

The new timeframe gave construction crews more opportunity to acquire all materials needed for the expansion. COVID-19 delayed shipping for numerous items, which stalled completion of the extension. The doors finally opened in October.

Recently, Ross became the Director of Behavioral Health. She plans to use additional ARPA funds to continue expanding the CTWC building. The plan is to build another wing to the facility and relocate Behavioral Health into the modern working space. Additional plans include upgrading the x-ray machine, adding space for medical procedures such as ultrasounds and providing rooms for specialized practices such as

Tips to eat healthier this holiday season

By Cathy Visser, Chehalis Tribal Wellness Center Dietician

Do you eat more candy, cookies and desserts during the holidays starting on Halloween and continuing through New Year’s Eve? Many people do.

Don’t despair. It’s been a tough year with the pandemic and limited ability to socialize and exercise with others. This can be a good time to find ways to eat better and move more. Here are some easy tips to incorporate:

- Bring a healthy dish to the potluck like a green salad, veggie tray, whole grain crackers and salmon dip, or fresh fruit salad.
- When eating at a potluck or holiday meal, take less of each food and savor it.
- For seconds, choose the foods you love the most and enjoy them.
- Tune in to your hunger and fullness. If you wait too long to eat between meals, you will be overly hungry and primal hunger kicks in, making it hard to stop eating.
- Start your day with a healthy breakfast such as oatmeal with nuts and fruit or eggs and whole grain toast.

- Keep fruit close for snacking.
- Carry a water bottle and try to drink six-eight cups of water each day.
- Avoid sugary coffee drinks and sodas, which have six to 13 teaspoons of sugar per 12-ounce serving.
- Use a smaller plate for your meal so it looks fuller.
- Slow down when eating. It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain that you are full.
- Chew each bite thoroughly (10-20 times) and put your fork down between bites.
- If you are the cook, use more herbs and spices and less butter and oil to flavor foods. For example, sweet potatoes are naturally sweet and can be served without added sugar or marshmallows.
- Enjoy your holiday meals even if you eat more than usual. Feeling guilty leads to restrictive eating and potentially binge eating.
- In addition to listening to your hunger and fullness, try to find ways to move more.

This can be challenging when it is rainy or snowy outside. Make a plan to meet a friend a few times each week to walk somewhere safe inside or outside.

Consider going back to the gym to work out depending on your vulnerability to COVID-19. Some gyms are offering live online Zoom classes, plus there are free yoga and exercise classes on YouTube.

Cleaning, gardening and chores around the house also count toward your daily movement. Find ways to move that you enjoy and you’ll be more likely to stick with it.

It is my goal to provide medical nutrition therapy to all people served by the Chehalis Tribal Wellness Center.

Have a safe and relaxing holiday season!
The Chehalis Tribe celebrated Halloween with multiple events in the week leading up to Oct. 31.

Festivities began with Tribal Trick-or-Treat on Oct. 28. Head Start and Early Head Start children visited various tribal buildings to collect candy and show off costumes. Staff from the Healing House, Community Center, Housing and the Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel took part with a trunk-or-treat path along the softball field.

Behavioral Health held two separate events on Oct. 29 to start a weekend of fun for the youngsters. Healing House staff decorated the building as a haunted house to delight and spook guests. The event coincided with another activity by staff members, who put together a Halloween Carnival at the tribe’s main Behavioral Health offices.

The final event of the weekend was the annual Halloween Party at the Community Center on Oct. 31. The evening was filled with activities such as a haunted house, raffle prizes, a trunk-or-treat and candy stations for youth inside the Community Center.

Behavioral Health gave the tribal community excellent scares at its Halloween haunted house on Oct. 29. The evening was one of various outreach events the program holds throughout the year. The haunted house kicked off early and drew in guests until late in the evening.

The event was an opportunity for community outreach and to welcome visitors to the Healing House, which provides essential services to those who live on the Chehalis Reservation. Staff members organized a photo booth, haunted maze, goody bags and a barbecue meal to go. Five dedicated members recruited helpers (ghouls) to help with the Halloween celebration. About 135 community members participated in the activities.

The Healing House, formally called the Wilson House, is a grant-funded trauma service and includes crime victims advocacy, domestic violence and youth in need of care (youth prevention). The Healing House is under the Behavioral Health umbrella. Staff offer one-on-one grief trauma counseling, cultural craft classes and support to specific group counseling.

From the Healing House: “Thank you to all who planned, helped, cooked and enjoyed our haunted house. We truly hope you had fun.”

Photos provided by Jodie Smith and Theresa Youckton

Spell-binding fun

Healing House haunted event draws 135 community visitors

CONTACT US

For questions, call 360-709-1677. Behavioral Health members are always welcoming visitors to Healing House to meet the friendly staff and learn about services.
Giving thanks to those who served

The Chehalis Tribal Heritage & Culture and Human Resources departments took time Nov. 10 to honor employees that served this country in the United States armed forces.

Chairman Harry Pickernell Sr. presented handmade drums to the 21 tribal government employees at the ceremony. The tribe is deeply grateful for military service provided by these brave people.

Youth Serveries Coordinator Melanie Stevens explained the importance of the project and the effort that went into making the custom handmade deer hide drums for the tribal veterans who represent four of the five military branches: Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. The drums were designed with a military emblem in the center to signify the specific branch each employee served in.

“It touches my heart. I want to thank them for their service,” Stevens said. She personally has many relations and friends who served in the armed forces. Tribal leaders felt it was important to acknowledge these brave men and women on the holiday.

Chairman Harry Pickernell Sr. gave a sincere thank you announcement over the intercom to all of the military service providers before they were gifted with the drums.

Chairman Pickernell said the event is “to show them how much we appreciate them and they’re in our hearts. The Chehalis have a long history of having warriors in our tribe.” He said it is the tribe’s duty to honor the men and woman who have served and protected this country.

The tribal veterans appreciated the heartfelt gifts. Chehalis Tribal Public Safety Sgt. Sean Uhlich spoke about the recognition.

“It’s not what we do it for but it’s nice for people to acknowledge it,” he said.

Above: Daniel “Bones” Gleason attends a ceremony honoring veterans on Nov. 10 at Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel.
Left: Farley Youckton Sr. (left) is recognized for his military service.

TRIBAL VETERANS

Rita Mercer: Air Force
John Williams: Air Force
James Elder: Army
Derec Filkins: Army
Samuel Heller: Army
David Jessen: Army
John McPherson: Army
Frances Pickernell: Army
Miguel Santiago: Army
Robert Strader: Army
Sean Uhlich: Army
Scott Williams: Army
Kyle Gulbranson: Marines
Edward Keller: Marines
Kelyn KickingWoman: Marines
Michael McNair: Marines
Gary Waer: Marines
Tabitha Dennison: Navy
Amanda Lawton: Navy
Nelson Terry: Navy
Farley Youckton: Navy
Roberta Josephine "Skamink" "Bootsie" Wells Secena

Sept. 16, 1939–Oct. 6, 2021

To lose someone I loved so much brings pain beyond belief. There are no words to ease my pain, sadness and grief. I feel I've lost someone so close, so wonderful and dear. I think about your special ways and wish that you were near. But although you have left this world, you'll stay within my heart guiding like an angel knowing you are always near. For love is everlasting and so are my memories and your legacy that's always there to light the way for me.

– Roberta's only daughter Allison (Secena) Carter

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For you are with me. Your rod and your staff they comfort me.”

Psalm 23:4

Roberta's funeral service was on Oct. 12, 2021, at the Chehalis Tribal Community Center. Ben Charles Jr. officiated the ceremony. Many attended to show their love and respect for Roberta. She was buried next to her husband at Secena cemetery.

Roberta is survived by sons Raymond Jr., William, Donald and Ron; daughter Allison (Secena) Carter; siblings William, Roy and Rena; 21 grandchildren; and 32 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by husband Raymond; son Samuel; brothers Ralph, Rueban, Ronnie, Richard, Reggie, Raymond and Robert; sisters Rosetta, Ruth, Ruby and Sophie; great granddaughter Hona Daniels and many nieces and nephews.

Pallbearers were Reggie Sanders, Jeff Choke, Jerry Youckton, Joe Sanders, Mike Sanders and Roger Shortman.

Dale Francis Klatush Jr.

Oct. 31, 1959–Oct. 18, 2021

Dale Francis Klatush Jr. was born Oct. 31, 1959, at Centralia Providence Hospital. He resided in Oakville and peacefully passed Oct. 18, 2021, at Providence St. Peter’s Hospital in Lacey with his loved ones by his side.

Dale Jr. was born to Vivian Rosalind Young and Dale Klatush Sr.

He met the love of his life 1981 and they started a family in 1984. He raised his nine children and 13 grandchildren to be full of love and abundance.

Dale was so full of love and such an amazingly strong man. He was all about his wife, kids and grandchildren. Anytime you saw him, you knew Paula wasn’t too far behind, and vice versa.

Dale always had the biggest smile on his face and gave the best hugs. Anyone who knew him, knew when you hugged him, you had his scent on you for the rest of the day. His cologne was distinctive. Dale was a stubborn man, but he was loyal. It didn’t matter what time of day, if you needed him, he was there.

Dale made it to about the ninth grade in school, then later earned his GED. First, he was employed with the Chehalis Tribal Housing Department. He helped build the End of the Trail I. He later worked at Lucky Eagle Casino.

For the past 14 years, Dale worked at End of the Trail II in maintenance alongside his wife, Paula, and nephew Christopher.

Whenever Dale wasn’t at work, he was at the river, which he called his second home. Dale and his son Paul and grandsons Nathaniel and Ulises were always at the river fishing or out looking for a deer. Dale took such pride in teaching his children and grandchildren how to fish and hunt.

In his younger years, Dale was one of the best pool players around the Pacific Northwest. He could win a game off of a break. Dale and Paula went all around the counties playing pool with their group.

Dale was the best man in all of our lives. May this legendary man rest in peace.

He is survived by his wife, Paula Klatush; sons Dale III, Derrick and Paul; daughters Connie, Correna, Mariah, Airel and Serenity; grandchildren Desirray, Jordan, Nathaniel, Ulises, Dakota, Dale IV, Cayden, Rena, Paulita, Francisca, Sunshine, Chase and Richard; sisters Karen and Bev; brothers Renny and Bruce; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Dale was preceded in death by his daughter Cassandra Pope; sisters Colleen Klatush and Joyleen McCrory; brother Larry Sasticum; and parents Vivian Young and Dale Klatush Sr.

Candlelight services were Oct. 26 and funeral services were Oct. 27 at the Chehalis Tribal Community Center.
Hundreds of Chehalis tribal members filled Great Wolf Lodge’s Events Center in Grand Mound on Nov. 6 for the 2021 Annual Meeting.

The day featured giveaway items from tribal departments and businesses, raffle prizes and annual updates from tribal leaders and management. It also offered an opportunity for tribal members to visit with each other.

The Chehalis Tribe is a tight-knit community. Prior to COVID-19 mandates, it would always reconnect at large gatherings. This year’s Annual Meeting served as the first chance for many tribal members to visit in person with each other.

It feels like a family reunion, one tribal elder said.

Great Wolf Lodge catered breakfast and lunch for those in attendance. The five Business Committee members took the floor and introduced themselves, then started the meeting at noon. Chehalis tribal elder Wayne Barr said a prayer as the official introduction.

Chairman Harry Pickernell Sr. thanked tribal members and medical staff that helped keep the community safe for the past two years. Those unable to attend in person were given an online alternative.

The tribe took many precautions to ensure its members would be comfortable and follow safety guidelines. Chairman Pickernell said in-person gatherings are the most beneficial way of getting information out to the masses. He has periodically provided tribal updates on social media, but prefers face-to-face meetings.

“The video updates are nice, but it’s nothing like being in person and seeing everyone’s face,” Chairman Pickernell said. “I enjoy this platform much better.”

Although the COVID-19 pandemic caused many uncertain times for the tribe, the chairman wanted to highlight and thank tribal leaders for adjusting quickly. Various resources were utilized to keep the tribe moving forward amid the crises and uncertainty created by COVID-19.

Leadership groups kept business thriving and the tribe even developed new opportunities for its enterprises, education programs and tribal wellness.

The latest update for the community is that COVID-19 vaccines are now available for ages 5-11.

The Annual Meeting brought hope for the future that more doors will be reopened and the tribe will continue expanding and moving forward in 2022.

The Chehalis Tribe’s Annual Meeting on Nov. 6 at Great Wolf Lodge provided a welcome reunion after many long months of social distancing.

Tribe reconnects during Annual Meeting

Family and friends enjoy long-awaited visit while chairman provides community updates

Chairman Harry Pickernell Sr. thanked tribal members and medical staff that helped keep the community safe for the past two years. Those unable to attend in person were given an online alternative.

The tribe took many precautions to ensure its members would be comfortable and follow safety guidelines. Chairman Pickernell said in-person gatherings are the most beneficial way of getting information out to the masses. He has periodically provided tribal updates on social media, but prefers face-to-face meetings.
Breastfeeding help, health education, checks to buy food and services referrals

**NEXT DATE:** 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
Dec. 9 at the Wellness Center

**CONTACT:** Debra Shortman at 360-709-1689 or wicnutrition@spipa.org

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**VISION STATEMENT**

To be a thriving, self-sufficient, sovereign people, honoring our past and serving current and future generations.

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**PLANS ARE UNDER WAY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW OAKVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING USING BOND FUNDS.**

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**EXCITING OAKVILLE UPDATES**

We are so grateful for this school year to have gotten off to such a great start, even in the midst of COVID-19. Oakville School District has so much to be grateful for. Here are the highlights:

- Our enrollment is more than 330 students. This is the most students we have had in Oakville in many years!
- We hired almost a dozen new staff this fall. We have grown and needed to add four new staff on top of the group we already had last year.
- We opened an Elementary library and are stocking it with many books for students to check out and use.
- Finally, our school bond projects are about ready to get started. We will be replacing the old elementary building and remodeling the high school, putting in new parking lots all around campus and working on the softball and baseball fields as well as adding bleachers to the football field. We are making several other small improvements. There will be a few inconveniences in the meantime, but it is all temporary so we can have amazing facilities next year.

Please reach out if you any questions or comments. Also, we need classified staff and substitute teachers. If you have thought about bus driving, cooking, maintenance/custodial or paraeducator work, we are hiring staff and need more people to help serve our students. Go to oakvilleschools.org or call 360-273-0171.

– Rich Staley, Oakville School District Superintendent

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**WIC THROUGH SPIPA**

Breastfeeding help, health education, checks to buy food and services referrals

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Dec. 9 at the Wellness Center

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**USDA FOOD PROGRAM**

9:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Dec. 16
at the Community Center

South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency’s program offers food to fill your freezer, refrigerator and cupboards

**CALL:** Debra Shortman at 360-709-1689 or 360-438-4216