

## Native Americans gather

# Annual powwow starts Friday

By Lori Steinhauer  
Of the Emerald

Eagle tail feathers and head feathers will spin with traditional dancers in buckskin costumes this weekend in McArthur Court, and spectators may want to capture the action on film. But if an eagle feather drops to the floor, the dancing will be interrupted for a special ceremony, and no photographs are to be taken, according to ancient Native American tradition.

"The eagle is sacred to us because that is our way of getting in touch with the Creator," says Lori Edmo, University Native American Student Union co-director.

The Native American gatherings began as a religious ceremony for young tribesmen going to and coming from war, says Raymond Burke, 61, tribal chief and judge of the Umatilla Indian Reservation outside of Pendleton.

Burke says when a dancer drops an eagle feather, a warrior tells a war story and receives a gift for telling the story before the feather is returned to the dancer.

The gatherings create a setting in which senior Native Americans pass on words of wisdom to their younger counterparts.

War dance competitions became a traditional part of the ceremonies now called "powwows," Burke says.

"Some of the people get a little perturbed when you call it a powwow, especially on the reservations," Burke says. "I think that was the white man word."

"I don't know how powwows got in there, but I think it was from the movies," he adds.

Native American traditions will be preserved and shared through song and dance with Native and non-Native Americans of the Northwest at this weekend's 17th annual NASU Powwow.

"That's how we learned as children...not by reading books," Edmo says.

Of the 90 declared Native American students at the University, about 30 or 40 take part in NASU and in the planning of this major extravaganza.

The NASU Powwow is one of the largest Native American gatherings in western Oregon, and at least 300 people, including up to 200 Native Americans from

about 20 different tribes are expected to come to this weekend's event. Some Eugene community members will share their homes for the weekend with some of the travelers.

The show and feast, which cost \$3,000 to put on, is funded by the Incidental Fee Committee, Council for Minority Education, NASU fund raising and other donations, Edmo says. Although this weekend's Powwow is free to the public, donations for the performers are welcome, she adds.

A Grand Entry ceremony and traditional dancing are scheduled to last from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Exhibits, plus competitive and inter-tribal dancing will fill Saturday's noon to 5 p.m. activities.

Sunday at noon a traditional feast of salmon and buffalo will be held at The Longhouse at 1606 Columbia, which is NASU's gathering place for social and cultural events.

Edmo says the emcee at Mac Court will inform the public when to participate in circle dances, also called friendship dances. Art Broncheau, NASU co-director, adds that people are encouraged to ask questions because the Powwow's purpose is to educate the University community about the Native American culture.

Singing is an essential part of the gathering, Edmo says. "If we didn't have the songs to hand down from one generation to the next, there wouldn't be any dancing."

The evenings open with the Grand Entry of dancers lined up and flag holders, who are Native American veterans of war, behind them. The flags are planted in the center of the floor, followed by a flag song and a prayer.

The flags and flag holders remain in position in the center until the end, when the song is sung to retire the flags and their holders for the evening.

The Powwow represents similar traditions of dressing up, dancing, drumming and feasting of various tribes. "Each tribe is not the same, we are all different,



Eagle tail feathers will only be part of the Native American Powwow scheduled for this weekend in McArthur Court.

but we do all get together at this time to share our cultures and see our friends," Edmo says.

Edmo says that while most of NASU's active members grew up on reservations, some grew up in urban areas. "But they still try to keep their heritage," she says.

For more information about NASU and the Powwow call 686-3723.

## Network gives Latin culture without politics

By Lori Steinhauer  
Of the Emerald

Merengue dances from the Dominican Republic, ancient Inca architecture from Machu Picchu and other parts of Latin American culture are seldom seen in the news today without being accompanied by political overtones.

However, in February, after a fruitless search for a non-political, bilingual Latin American club in Eugene, four people from Latin American countries created Encuentro Latino Americano Cultural Educativo (Latin American Educational Cultural Encounter). ENLACE weaves together a Latin American educational-cultural network excluding politics altogether.

Now with about 20 active participants from the University and the community, ENLACE meets weekly and holds periodical dances, presentations and other events for people who want to learn more about the customs and languages of various Latin American countries.

"In Latin America we know a lot about the United States, but in the United States we know very little about Latin America except for the drastic shots you

see in the news," says Susana Rice, one of ENLACE's coordinators.

Rice, a 1983 international studies graduate of the University, moved to Oregon in 1976 with her husband, a member of the U.S. Air Force who she met in Panama in 1972.

Rice says of ENLACE, "It becomes really international, and you want to get together and know more about each other."

Latin American countries have similarities and differences resembling those between the United States and

Canada. However, in Latin America dialects and accents vary more dramatically, Rice says. For instance, the four founders of ENLACE had difficulty finding a name that fit the organization without changing or losing meaning from one country to another.

Although ENLACE has been temporarily holding meetings and events at the Council for Human Rights in Latin America at 1236 Kincaid St., the group is seeking a permanent meeting place. At the Council, Latin American dance classes sponsored by ENLACE are held every Friday from 7 to 9 p.m. for \$2 per class. In addition, the group has brought Ritmo Tropical, a Latin musical group from Portland, to the Council for monthly benefits to help cover ENLACE's events and publicity expenses.

On Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. 10 Chileans will share Chilean food, music and culture at the Council. Proceeds from the event will go to Chile earthquake victims, Rice says.

"Eventually we would like to expand and bring in speakers from those (Latin American) countries," Rice says.

For more information about ENLACE call 342-8047 or 485-4579.



Ligia Morales (left) and Susana Rice, two ENLACE founders, show items from Latin American culture.

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