



The 1998 Spring Pow Wow (above) held at McArthur Court celebrated Native American culture and brought it to the students. Courtesy of the Native American Student Union

# Pow wow to re-introduce campus to native culture

■ The 32nd annual Spring Pow Wow will feature Native American dances, music and traditions this weekend

By Lisa Toth  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Dance performances and drum beats will highlight the 32nd annual Spring Pow Wow, a celebration combining the fun and spiritual aspects of Native American culture.

The Native American Student Union is hosting the event, which begins Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m. at McArthur Court. Approximately 2,000 people will partake in the two-day celebration, and the most intense competition dancing will take place Saturday evening from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

"The Pow Wow ... [brings] community together from all over the state of Oregon and even outside the state," said NASU external director Rachelle Pavao, a senior sociology major with ancestry in the Tlingit and Hawaiian tribes.

In the grand entry, a procession to bless the arena will include veterans, royalty (youth selected to represent tribes) and dancers carrying in the American flag, the Oregon state flag, a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action flag and the eagle staff, which is a symbol of Native American heritage.

Dancers of all ages will compete in an assortment of dances, donning the appropriate regalia for different songs.

Some dances are specified for women only, such as the owl and jingle dress dances. In choice dances, women choose their partners, and the men cannot refuse.

Dancing can be a form of

prayer, a way of expressing joy or grief and a method of becoming closer with nature, according to the Native American Dance Performance Web site. Native American dance is centered around the drum, which is the key to Native American footwork.

During the dancing, there are facilitators in the arena who keep the dancing moving such as this year's whip man, Craig Whitehead, a volunteer from the community. NASU co-director Melyssa Swartz, a junior political science major from the northern Cheyenne tribe, explained that one of the whip man's main responsibilities is to pick up sacred eagle feathers if they fall to the ground. Native Americans believe that if a feather does fall to the ground, something bad will happen.

Pavao said that for newcomers who have never attended a customary Pow Wow, the experience takes them out of their comfort zone and into an unfamiliar experience. Tana 'Atchley, a senior journalism major from the Modoc and Yahooskin tribes, said the best way for people to learn is to observe and participate.

"One misconception is that a lot of people think the music all sounds the same," Pavao said. "However there are words to the songs, and the songs are different depending on the type of dance."

While dancing is the main attraction, other Native American customs will be honored. Fried bread Indian tacos will be sold by Native American vendors along with artwork, bead work, leather work, flutes and woven chairs. First place dancers will be awarded traditional wool trade blankets,

known as Pendleton blankets.

Linda Trefren, a freshman biochemistry major from the Aleut tribe, said she hopes the Pow Wow will be an opportunity for students to understand that a Native American population does exist on campus.

There are approximately 136 Native American students on campus, according to NASU, which is less than 1 percent of the overall student population.

"I want people to know we are here," Trefren said.

Trefren added that the Pow Wow is an opportunity for other Native Americans to know a native community and support system exists.

Swartz said the first Pow Wows originated in the Ponca tribes on the southern U.S. plains more than 300 years ago. She said it was originally a summer gathering for different clans to celebrate. However, now Pow Wows take place year-round and most Native American communities have Pow Wows. Swartz said it is a practice that begins in elementary school.

The University of Washington, Portland State University and Stanford University will all be sponsoring Pow Wow celebrations this weekend as well, and Oregon State University's Pow Wow takes place next weekend.

All mothers present Sunday at Oregon's Pow Wow will be honored with flowers out of respect for Mother's Day.

"We'd like to see people from campus take on the challenge and come to the Pow Wow," Pavao said. "It's something you can't learn in a classroom."

# Oregon nursing home sued again

McMINNVILLE — A second family has filed a lawsuit against a nursing home where four patients died after being given morphine.

Alecia Avery Juber of Medford is suing the Sheridan Care Center, the center's administrator and owner Linda Hill Johnston, nurse Michael J. Coons, Legacy Visiting Nurse Association Inc. and several unnamed nurses and nurse assistants, the News-Register reported Thursday.

Juber's father, John Avery, died at the center in January 1998.

Juber's complaints about his

death eventually led to a state investigation that uncovered three other deaths that occurred around the same time.

In each of the cases, Coons gave the patient morphine.

State investigators determined the center failed to provide basic care for the center's residents and that the patients died after receiving excessive doses of morphine.

The state fined the center \$6,000, and the Yamhill County District Attorney and state Attorney General's offices subsequently

launched a criminal investigation.

Coons has claimed that he was only following instructions and did nothing wrong. Nursing home officials maintain that the four patients did not die of morphine overdoses.

A separate investigation resulted last month in the federal government threatening to pull Medicare funding from Legacy Visiting Nurse Association Hospice — which was helping care for Avery before his death.

The Associated Press

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## The Native American Student Union University of Oregon

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