

RUN TO THE ROGUE

Siletz Elders Participate in Run

by Shirley B. Walker, Elders Chairman

We left Siletz at 8:20 a.m. on Sept. 15. We stopped at Florence and bought paper to make signs for the elders' bus. Next year, if I have another "elders moment" about making signs, will someone remind me to make signs to support the run? It was a great chance for Maxine to meet men. The rest of us were in the bus, taping up signs and she was outside the bus charming them.

It was really hard to drive by the Mill Casino. The wheel kept jerking to the left, but I didn't lose control. A nickel machine was in there saying, "Feed me, feed me."

We stopped at Bullard Park near Bandon to meet the van from Portland and the other elders. Kay Steele then took over driving the elders' bus and Alice Werth drove the blue elders' van.

We had lunch with the runners and continued traveling south. I stayed with the runners. It's great fun to go with the runners, drive, watch them run and walk. My great niece, Lynette, and great nephew, Gyrrad, ran through Bandon. Those two run like deer. Val and Larry walked/ran through Bandon and took good care of me.

My daughter, Heather, had to work Friday; she caught up with us at Cape Blanco. She ran with Selene's daughter, Sam, through Port Orford to Battle Rock. They traveled all night down Highway 101, up the north bank of the river, over Lobster Creek to the south bank of the Rogue.

The city of Port Orford presented our tribe with a special proclamation supporting our Run to the Rogue. They prepared a dinner at the community center and treated our elders with much respect, making them feel welcome. All of us appreciated the hot food.

We met at Battle Rock at about 10:30 p.m. for the prayer service. Selene led us in prayer. Her leadership qualities are many; she concentrates on the positive and is a great inspiration.

Randy and Rusty sang songs; Randy sings our songs the way I remember Dad and my uncles singing. We all participated in singing what I call Dad's song. The spirits were with us that evening and made us feel at peace and united as one people. We need that. We need to pray together and support one another in all that we do.

A lot of people do a great deal of work to manage the Run to the Rogue. Thank you to everyone, including but not limited to Tony Whitehead, Craig Whitehead, Tami Miner, Kitti Hostler, Carol Blomstrom, Robert Kentta, Laura Bremner, Benny Marzan, and Val and Larry Hibdon.

Selene and Tami did a great job organizing the sign-up sheet to keep the runners on track. Robert and Laura worked hard to dig the pit to cook the salmon. Kitti and Carol do a fantastic job of cooking the salmon. Benny Marzan runs many miles to support our tribe and we especially want to thank Benny for his help.

Val and Larry were great in helping the elders and provided us with their support. Homer Garrett helped us run the lift. He had to travel with 10 women. Good job, Homer. I'm glad you didn't lose your sense of humor.

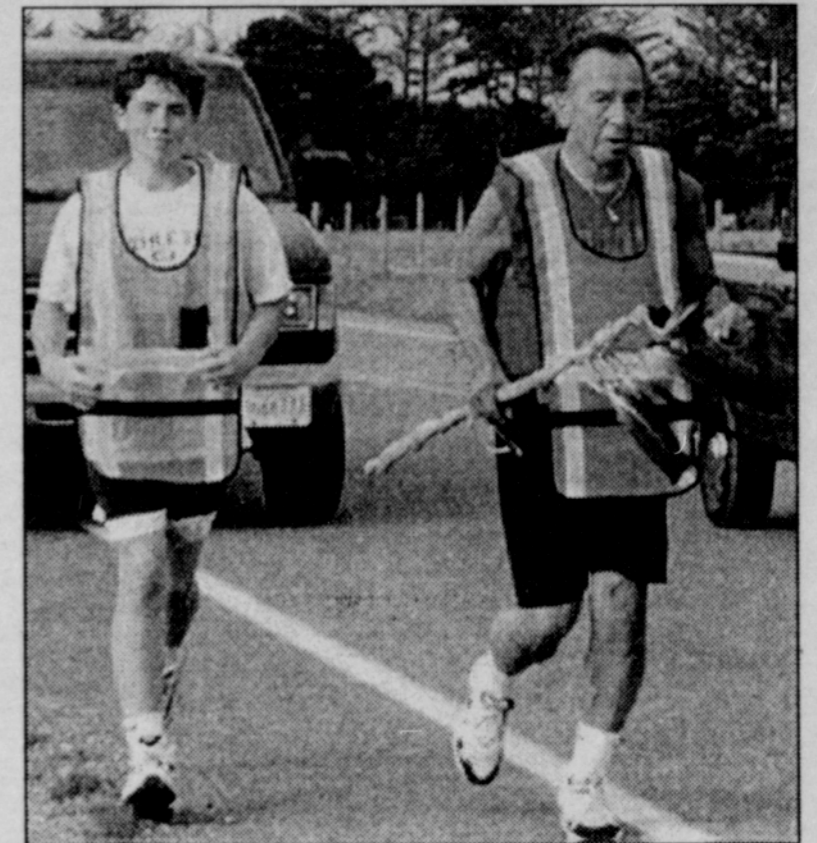
Thank you to Marci Garrett for arranging the motel rooms for us. We missed you, Marci. Next year, we will have to take a special van with two car seats for you.

We walked the last mile together to the end of the run. It was a great honor for me to carry the staff part of the way. William DePoe Jr. traveled from Seattle to participate in the run. He's a Siletz elder, was one of the runners, and carried the staff to the end of the run.

I can remember my brother-in-law, Robert, saying many years ago, "How will you know where you are going if you don't know where you came from?" When we arrived at the end of the run, I felt at home. The river, the trees, the peace – that's where my people came from.

The feather dancers put together a program. It was a great sight to see our dancers performing on the platform located on the banks of the river. We stayed for the first performance and left about midnight to rest up for the next day's journey.

All of the elders enjoyed their trip to the Rogue and we're looking forward to next year's trip. Again, thank you to everyone for everything.



Gyrrad Hibdon (l) and William DePoe Jr.



Woody Muschamp (l) and John Roe Jr.



Kay Steele (l) and Heather Walker