



Above: Marlene Stuart works on a cedar bark basket at Culture Camp, which is open to people of all ages.

Below: Kids play organized games outside to burn off some excess energy.



Erik Clawson scrapes a hide in preparation for tanning.



## Keeping Alive the Past

by Leslie O'Donnell of the News-Times in Newport, Ore.  
(editorial reprinted with permission)

Passing on the traditions of days gone by is a sure way of maintaining one's cultural and ethnic heritage, and of keeping a link between generations alive as well.

The Siletz Tribal Culture Camp, profiled in an article in the Community section of today's edition, is an example of doing just that.

While the camp prepares young people for the annual Siletz pow-wow, which arrives next week, it also teaches them the skills to carry on the traditions of their elders in everyday life, to go back to their homes and share what they have learned, and to bring widely dispersed tribal members together for food and fellowship.

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians have worked hard in recent years to make sure their traditions find understanding and acceptance among the younger generation. Not only are crafts or practices taught, but their place in the grander scheme of things, the natural world, is explained as well.

In the fast-paced world of today, dominated by television and technology, it's easy to forget where we came from and who we are.

The tribal members are doing a good job of showing the rest of us the way to remember. (lod)

## Siletz Culture Camp Teaches Traditions to Young People

by Justin Lacche of the News-Times in Newport, Ore. (reprinted with permission)

The gentle sound of laughter rolled over Government Hill as the final day of Culture Camp concluded for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon.

The three-day event was a celebration of the past art and cultural history of the tribes, as well as a look into the evolution of self-expression for the more than 3,000 tribal members.

The camp honored tribal elders and helped pass tangible skills to the new generation, said Selene Rilatos, cultural program coordinator for the tribes.

"We have people who literally made the trip from Kansas City, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles to be a part of this," said Rilatos. "This isn't just for the children, although we have many activities for them to participate in. This is a way of all of us getting to keep in touch, and have something to bring back to their families."

Although she gave credit to many volunteers and tribal leaders, Rilatos had a tough task. The Culture Camp acts as a warm up to the much-celebrated pow-wow Aug. 10-12, and provides venues of dance, traditional salmon cooking, basket weaving, and arrowhead construction, just to name a few.

"A lot of these incorporate both the traditional and more modern styles. We try to teach as much of the traditional style as possible to maintain and celebrate the ways of our elders. But we are seeing new styles, color use for example, coming from the younger generation. It can be a good mix of both," Rilatos said.

A young girl took Rilatos by the hand and led her to the middle of the cultural center to prepare the seminar on pow-wow etiquette. Various elders, some of whom are only two generations removed from the period when the tribes thrived freely throughout Oregon and northern California, were spread throughout the tribal center helping children put together moccasins and learn the native language.

By 1 p.m., the salmon pit was in full swing, and head cook Kitti Hostler was working with her team of Carol Blomstrom, Heather Moore, Ivan Brown, and Daniel Brown.

The team had been laboring for hours just to get the salmon pit perfect, and then carefully watched for about 30 minutes as each of the fish was cooked.

Using alder for fuel and cedar to hold the salmon, Hostler and her team cooked about a dozen of the fish before allowing the growing crowd of hungry admirers to try it.

"OK, what do you think, is it time to try one?" asked Daniel Brown with the slightest smirk, knowing how hungry the 15 to 20 onlookers had become.

"All right then, dig in," added Brown.

Within seconds, the plate was bare.

"It looks like piranha must have been here," giggled Hostler. "Oh, well, that's a good sign at least."

Hostler explained that for the people of the tribes, such a meal was a celebration of a greater sense of nature. In preparing to cook, she soaked all the cedar in the Siletz River for days, and led a prayer before the cook started.

"We prayed for good luck in that the food would bring health to our people," Hostler said. "We try to teach these things to kids here so they understand the greater meaning of this."

A few hundred yards away, D.J. Rogers and his seminar participants were carving arrowheads from flint rock. Students aged 7 to 13 watched Rogers, then tried to emulate his technique with their own pieces.

One student, Juanita Lane, an attentive and talented young woman, produced an elegant and perfectly symmetrical arrowhead.

Lane worked side by side with young tribal members and residents of Lincoln County.

"This is open to all 3,000 members of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz and other members of communities in surrounding areas, and we welcome that," said Rilatos.

Such shows of teamwork, tolerance, and appreciation for the native peoples of the coast continued for the rest of the day, culminating with the salmon dinner. In a prelude for larger events to follow, the latest Culture Camp showed off some of the best of what this area has to offer.