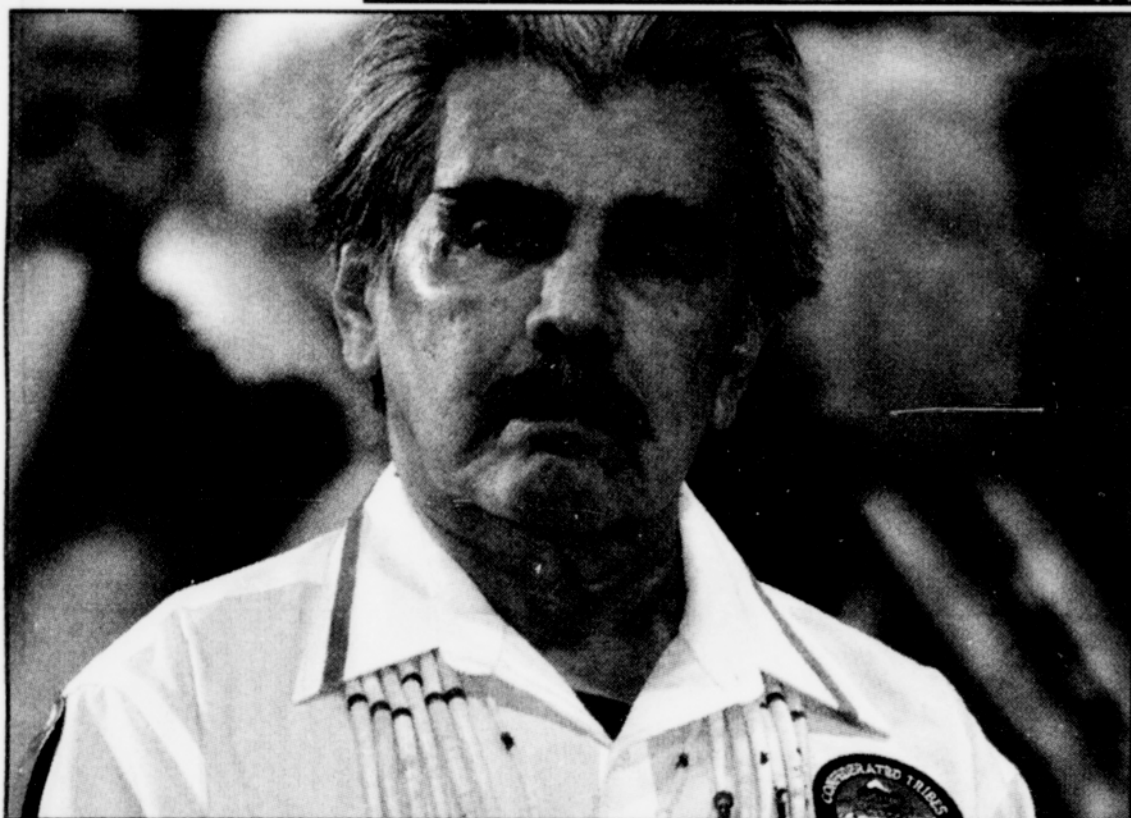


# GATHERING OF OREGON'S FIRST NATIONS



**RESPECT** – Warm Springs Traditional Chief Delvis Heath (left) sings at the conclusion of “The Gathering of Oregon Nations” pow-wow grand entry on Saturday, Jan. 31 in Salem, Ore.



*Siletz Tribal Elder Dennis Lane*



*Several Oregon Tribes participated in the two-day event.*

Photos by Brent Merrill

## Siletz Tribal Members Represent at Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Pow-Wow

*by Brent Merrill*

Many Siletz Tribal members made their way to Salem recently for the Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Pow-Wow at the Oregon State Fairgrounds' Jackman-Long Pavilion on Jan. 31.

Oregon is turning 150 this year and as part of the State of Oregon's sesquicentennial celebration, the five Western Oregon Tribes – The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians; the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw; the Coquille Indian Tribe; The Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua; and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde invited all other Oregon Tribes to participate.

With the Tribes' history being much older than the 150 years of statehood on this land, the pow-wow was an opportunity to showcase the current state of affairs for all Oregon Tribes and a way to highlight all of their accomplishments.

“Tribes in this area have lived on this land since time immemorial,” said Siletz Tribal Chairman Delores Pigsley. “Our history is much longer than the state of Oregon and we are proud to share our culture with the people of this state.”

State officials geared up for Oregon's 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration, which took place throughout February, and Tribal officials chose the late January date as a way to further showcase the fact that Tribes in Oregon were here on this land long before white settlers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Grand Ronde Tribal Elder and former Siletz Tribal Council member Bob Tom hosted the event as emcee and added his personal touch to the Tribal exhibition. Tom explained the importance of Grand Entries to the non-Indians in attendance and he explained “Indian Time” to those waiting for the grand entry to start on time.

Several Tribal members took advantage of the gathering to display their artwork and crafts at vendor tables. Among the items for sale were earrings made by Siletz Tribal Elder Dennis Lane and traditional coastal Indian basket hats by Grand Ronde Tribal member Bobby Mercier.

Throughout the two-day event, several Tribal members gave demonstrations of traditional activities, like the making of eel trap baskets, drum making and art shaped from natural fibers like bulrushes, cedar strips and sweet grass strands.

Several Native leaders were in attendance at the event – including Siletz Tribal Chairman Dee Pigsley, Cow Creek Chairman Sue Shaffer, Warm Springs traditional Chief Delvis Heath and Umatilla Tribal leader Jay Minthorne.

Minthorne was introducing his new wife around and explained that she was from the Klamath Tribe. When he was informed that Klamath Tribal Chairman Joe Kirk was in attendance and known to take his communities' women home if not spoken for properly, Minthorne quickly explained that he already had sought the permission from Kirk to get married.

Siletz Tribal Elders Chewescla DePoe and Ed Ben wore their traditional regalia and were part of the pow-wow's two grand entries.

The important historical event started with a proclamation signed on Jan. 30 at the State Capitol Galleria by Gov. Ted Kulongoski. With the proclamation, Kulongoski declared Jan. 31 as “Oregon Tribal Nations Honor Day for the State of Oregon's Sesquicentennial.” The proclamation acknowledges Tribal sovereignty and the State of Oregon's government-to-government relationship with the nine federally recognized Oregon Tribes.