

TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

Elders' Wood Cut Attracts 39 Volunteers of All Ages

by Brent Merrill

What started out as a few of the locals cutting a few pieces of wood here and there on a crisp late spring morning soon turned into a major gathering of Tribal members teaming up to cut, stack and haul loads of wood off to heat the homes of area Elders.

The volunteer event on May 9 drew 39 people throughout the day and although everyone was working, there was a sense of harmony between young and Elder that reminded you of what things used to be like before video games and riding lawnmowers.

Family members worked side by side and seemed to enjoy each other as they took part in what has become an annual Tribal event.

This year's wood cut was sponsored by the Tribe's Natural Resources Department and the Tribal Natural Resources Committee and was held at the Tribe's Toledo Mill property.

"Cut Wood for the Elders Day" was organized, as usual, by Tribal Natural Resources Manager Mike Kennedy. He was joined by several local staff members and Tribal members who gathered to help out their Elders.

Local folks came out to volunteer their time to the Tribal Elders and they brought their hydraulic wood-splitters to help get things done. The volunteers cut and delivered 7½ cords and were treated to lunch and snacks throughout the day.

The group also cut four and a half cords of wood for future delivery to Tribal Elders for a total of 12 cords cut for the day's efforts. Thirteen Elders were served by the cut.

According to Kennedy, there have been 17 wood cut events since they began in 2003. He said 79¾ cords of wood have been split and delivered in the history of the event. There are 61¾ cords set aside for future delivery, bringing the total cut since 2003 to 141½ cords.

Kennedy said there have been 149 deliveries to Tribal Elders since 2003 and he said the source of the wood for the cuts varies.

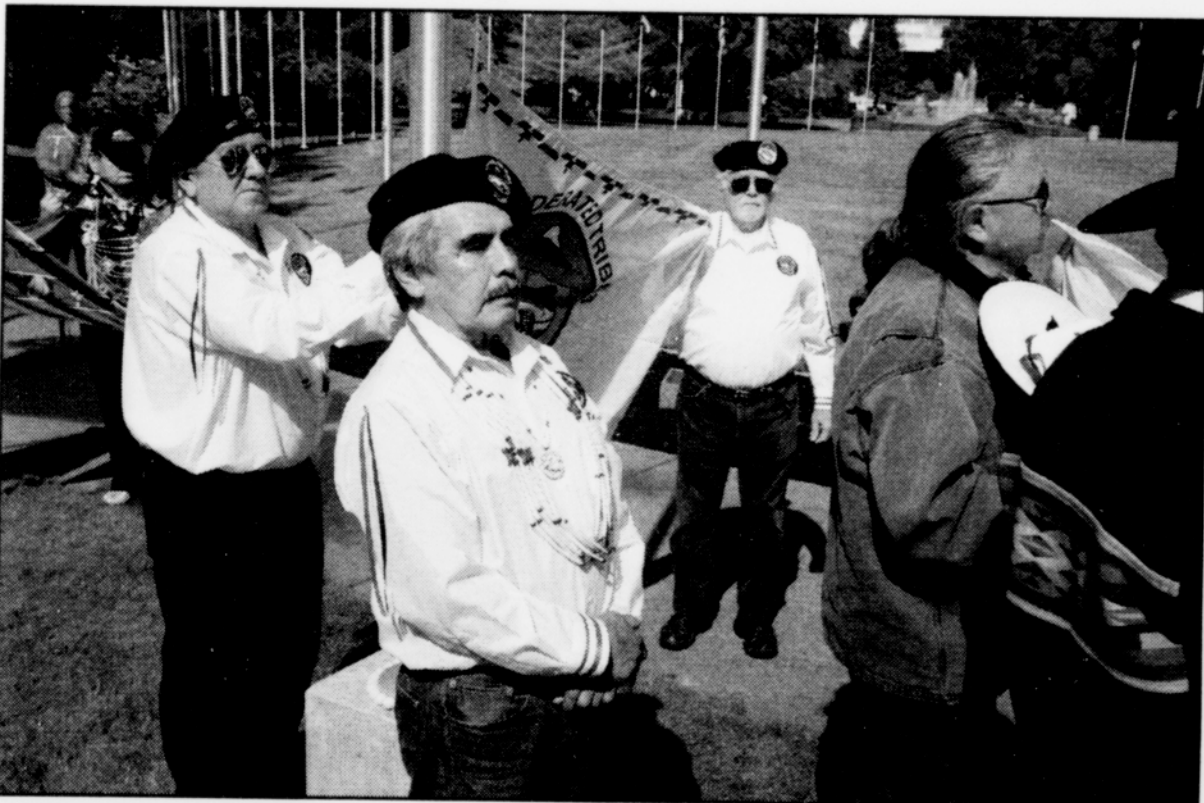
Tribal development projects that bring members new housing, Tribal businesses room to expand and the casino resort new options for revenue also bring about opportunities to claim wood for these events, explained Kennedy.

Various housing projects and clearing work at Government Hill was a source as was leftover wood from Tribal logging projects. Once the logging is completed, Tribal staff can get in there and gather wood for use in this fashion.

Future Elder's Wood Cut Days will be held July 11 and Sept. 19 at the Tribe's Toledo Mill site.



Volunteers for the Elders' wood cut include Cat Tufts, Pam Ben and Raymond Ben (top photo) and Shawn Foultnier, Dion Napolean, Lewis Napolean and Seth Benedict (bottom photo).



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leader and Commission on Indian Services Chairman Jay Minthorn when he started to refer to her as "Rep ..."

Everyone laughed as Minthorn then corrected himself to properly introduce Brown, who used to serve the state of Oregon as a representative in 1991 and then as a senator beginning in 1996 before being elected to her current position in the 2008 election.

In 1998, Brown was elected Democratic leader and became the first woman in Oregon to be elected senate majority leader in 2004.

Kulongoski remarked that he has enjoyed good relations with the Tribes over the years and looks forward to the trend in Oregon not only continuing into the future, but also serving as a model for other states to follow in establishing government-to-government relationships with Tribes in their areas.

Each Tribal leader took the opportunity to explain their pride in having what they all consider a positive relationship with state government and their feelings about the new flags being dedicated in the Walk of Flags area.

Each leader also took turns praising the services of Karen Quigley, director of the state Commission on Indian Services. Minthorn explained that the staff of the commission is two people and praised the amount of high-level work they get done between the leaders of the Tribes.

Following the Flag Dedication Ceremony, Tribal leaders gathered for a barbeque across the street from the Capitol at Water Fountain Park. The luncheon was sponsored by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians and prepared by staff of Cow Creek's Seven Feathers Casino.

RAISING THE TRIBAL FLAG – Siletz Tribal Elders and Veterans Alan Fish, Dennis Lane and Earl Edmonds raise the Tribal Flag at the State Capitol on May 14 as part of a special dedication ceremony during this year's annual Tribal Government Day.

STATE LEADER – Representatives of all nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon took part in Tribal Government Day. Gov. Ted Kulongoski said he was proud of the relationship he has shared with the Tribes and their leaders over the years. Siletz Tribal Chairman Delores Pigsley said she was proud to be a part of the unique event each year.