

On MMIR Day in Oregon ~

The crowds gathered throughout the day at the Oregon Convention Center Plaza in Portland, an event to bring attention to the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives. It was earlier this month, and the people were there to create space for remembering those who have been impacted.

Red shirts, ribbon skirts and red handprints filled the plaza square, as people were making signs with phrases like ‘We are their voices,’ ‘Honor their spirit,’ and ‘Justice for MMIR.’

Early in the day, a bald eagle flew overhead, a rare sighting in the middle of the city. As people paused to point it out, a hawk joined it, to many, like a blessing from the two birds.

Across the country on that day, May 5, people were honoring a National Day of Awareness and Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and People.

American Indian women are murdered at a rate of 10 times higher than the national average, and more than four in five American Indian women experience violence in their lifetime. This is according to the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center.

MMIR Day of Awareness and Action is a day to raise awareness, demand justice, take action and create space for healing.

“I think that the MMIR Day of Awareness and Action that we’re having today has two parts to it. I think there’s the external, bringing awareness,” Joshevama said, mentioning the importance of wearing red and holding signs out in public.

“And secondly just a space to be able to come together and hold space for those memories and the thoughts and the prayers that we

have for all those people,” she added.

Together in ceremony

Creating a space for both education and healing during a particularly intense day, organizers of the MMIR Day of Awareness and Action grounded the occasion with opportunities for ceremony.

After a free lunch provided by Sisters Fry Bread, Shalaya Williams, Cayuse from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, asked those gathered to come together in a circle.

Williams led more than 50 people in a breathing exercise, acknowledging that MMIR Day of Awareness brings up trauma for many people. Williams talked about how their grandmother taught them how to release that stored, intergenerational trauma and called on those in need of healing to step forward.

“Whoever has a heavy heart today, who needs extra prayer, come join me in the middle,” Williams said.

People stepped forward to form a smaller circle in the center around an abalone shell filled with burning sage. The smaller group held hands while Williams offered a song and prayer, encouraging those in the larger circle to do the same.

Later in the day, community members marched to the Willamette River to take part in another ceremony, joined from the water by the 7 Waters Canoe Family at the Duckworth Memorial Dock.

Around 50 people walked the three-quarters of a mile to the dock, including women pushing strollers, and elders pushing walkers.

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Angela Polk (at right), a citizen of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs and a Yakama Nation descendent, spent the walk to the river reflecting on her sister, Tina Spino, who was reported missing in the summer of 2020. Ms. Spino was 58 years old at the time of her disappearance. Her remains were discovered in 2021 in a remote location on the Warm Springs Reservation.



Jarrette Werk, Underscore Native News / Report for America

JUNE 30 2025 ADOPTION ELECTION

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs of Oregon

Voting is 8am – 8pm at the Warm Springs Community Center

BE IT RESOLVED, By the (29th) Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, pursuant to Article III, Section 3, as amended, of the Tribal Constitution and By-Laws, and Section 120.800 of Ordinance No. 94, that this Resolution is hereby approved as eligible to be submitted to the tribal membership for a **vote in an adoption election conducted as a Tribal election under Ordinance No. 44, for the purpose of voting to determine whether any of the persons, whose names that will be posted 90 days prior to referendum, the individual must receive a majority vote of the qualified voters in such election.**



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