

# Hall of Famer visits casino during Super Bowl

By Brent Merrill

National Football League Hall of Famer Fred Biletnikoff, who played his entire career with the Oakland Raiders, spent Super Bowl Sunday (Jan. 30) at the Tribe's Spirit Mountain Casino signing autographs and commenting on the game.

Biletnikoff, who was the Raiders #2 draft pick out of Florida State University in 1965, played 13 seasons as a wide receiver for Oakland (1965-78) and capped-off his career by winning the most valuable player award in Super Bowl XI.

He finished his professional football career with 589 receptions for 8,974 yards and 76 touchdowns. In his final college football game, Biletnikoff caught four touchdowns passes as the Seminoles defeated the University of Oklahoma in the Gator Bowl.

Biletnikoff, 56, and his wife Angela arrived in Oregon after spending the week in Atlanta going to pre-Super Bowl parties and gatherings.

Biletnikoff held court in the casino's Rogue River room while a crowd of men wearing Raider jerseys and hats, many accompanied by their children, lined up for autographs and bits of conversation with one of the game's true rebels.

When Biletnikoff played professional football it was a different time — a different game. The late 60's brought the turmoil and dissension of the younger generation to the forefront of the news and of people's minds.



Biletnikoff was a young man at the top of his profession at the time. His colorful array of Raiders teammates reflected the turmoil of the day in their dress, demeanor and style of playing football. The Raiders were known as the bad boys of the league. They led the league in penalties, fights and bail money spent.

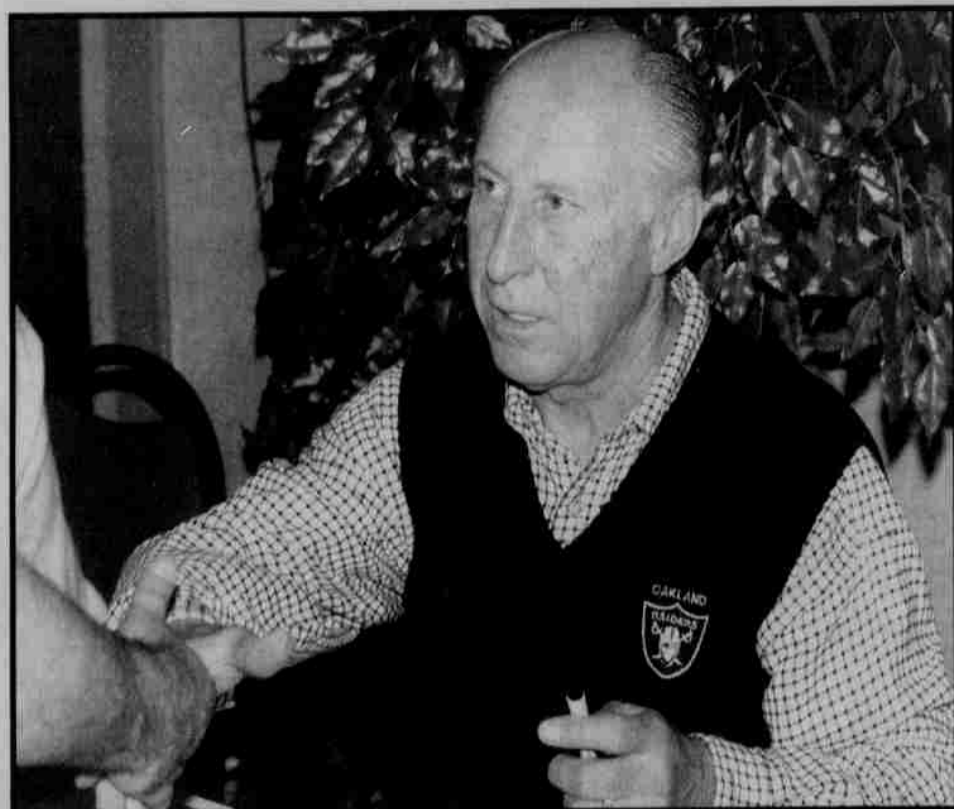
"We had so many different personalities back then," remembered a smiling Biletnikoff. "Today we check a kid's background to see if he got in any trouble in high school or in college. Back then, nobody checked our backgrounds. All they cared about was getting us out on the field to play."

Biletnikoff was one of the only players to wear his hair long. He wore a glue-like substance all over his arms and even around his ankles so he could get a better "grip" on the ball. Some people say he even smoked on the sidelines — during games.

Looking back, it seems the athletes of the 60's would have paid to play the game. It was an honor and a privilege for a select few people. Most players spent their entire careers in one organization.

Before the Super Bowl got started, Biletnikoff talked about the changes he has seen in the game of football from the 60's to today.

"When I played we were all underdog-type of guys," said Biletnikoff. "We didn't come from fancy backgrounds. We came from parts of the



Hall of Fame wide receiver Fred Biletnikoff visited the Casino on Super Bowl Sunday. Biletnikoff signed autographs and provided commentary on the game to a packed house of football fans. Photo by Brent Merrill

country where our parents struggled to make a living. When I had a chance to go down to Florida State (University) it was something special. It was something I never even dreamed about. Now, kids go around and pick whatever college they want to go to."

Biletnikoff also discussed the differences between other football legends like quarterbacks Daryl Lamonica and Kenny Stabler.

"Daryl was more of a loner-type person," said Biletnikoff. "He was quiet. He liked to go off and get away from football. Kenny was just

the opposite. Kenny was a little more social and had a little more of an open personality."

While signing autographs, Biletnikoff shared his views on the Native American sports mascot issue, which has been a subject of controversy between tribes and professional teams for many years.

"To be honest, I really don't know how I feel because I guess it has just been part of my life all the time. I don't think those things ever came up in the years I was playing football. But, I can see where it would also be offensive to people."

## SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO TRIBAL MEMBER EMPLOYEE PROFILE

### MICHAEL RING

**TITLE:** Security Officer  
**HIRE DATE:** October 2, 1995  
**HOME TOWN:** Grew up in Prospect, Oregon; now lives in Grand Ronde.

**EDUCATION:** Earned certificate as a Level I Water Treatment Plant Operator; certificate in lumber grading; graduated from

the first security officer training offered through Spirit Mountain Casino.

**JOB DUTIES:** Regular security officer work — whatever the job entails for the day. Works the night shift, 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.

**JOYS OF THE JOB:** "I like working with new people, and meeting staff and guests."

**MOST INTERESTING ASPECT OF THE JOB:** Getting to know the guests.

**HOBBIES:** Likes to read history.

**WORK PHILOSOPHY:** "Be honest at all times and do the very best job you can."

**WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO SMC?** "I had an injury from working in a saw mill. When I saw the security guard training classes were being offered, I applied."

**FAMILY:** Mother, Frances; father, George (D); brother, Monty (D); sisters: Patti, Georgene, and Mary.



Photo by Tracy Dugan

## SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2000

### BLACKJACK CAR GIVEAWAY

NEW GIVEAWAYS EVERY MONTH OF 2000

All month long, any Blackjack (including a Jack) will earn you a ticket to enter into the drawing for a brand new 2000 Jeep Cherokee. Ask your dealer for details.

FEBRUARY 15TH - 25TH

### COYOTE CLUB CASH BACK PROMO

COYOTE CLUB MEMBERS ONLY

Redeem your January slot points for cash February 14th-25th, 2000. Visit the Coyote Club desk for official rules.

THURSDAY, MARCH 9TH

### GEORGE CARLIN

SOLD OUT

One show only at 7pm. Ticket prices are \$25 and \$35. Tickets are available in person at Spirit Mountain Casino, at all Fred Meyer Fastix outlets, or by phone at 800/992-TIXX.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10TH

### BUY-IN SLOT TOURNAMENT

GUARANTEED \$15,000 FIRST PRIZE

\$150 buy-in. Tournament begins at 6pm. Register at the Coyote Club desk before March 3rd and receive a free dinner at Coyote's buffet. The top 30 scores receive a free night's stay at Spirit Mountain Lodge.

1-800-760-7977 • 503-879-2350  
Hwy 18, Grand Ronde, OR • www.spirit-mountain.com