

## Lummi's Freedom And Liberty Poles On Way To D.C.

■ Master Carver Jewell James continues to honor the victims of 9/11.



**Gathering Of Hope**— More than 200 students from this year's new class at Chemawa Indian School in Salem attended a ceremony to give prayers and blessings for the Lummi Freedom and Liberty poles, which were carved to honor the victims of the September 11 attacks on the Pentagon.

**"As Native Americans, one of our values is giving and this is a tremendous gift" — Cheryle Kennedy**

Photos by Peta Tinda

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A delegation of carvers, Veterans and volunteers is escorting the third series of Lummi Healing Poles to the Pentagon. The first stop was Chemawa Indian School in Salem.

About 240 students gathered around the two 13-foot carved cedar poles, praying and giving it blessings.

Carved in to the poles are two bears, one male and one female. The male is slightly larger than the female and has Grandfather Sun carved in its belly. The female has Grandmother Moon.

A third pole carved with an eagle will rest across the two upright poles.

Lummi Master Carver Jewell James spoke to the crowd of students, Veterans teachers and delegates from many Oregon Tribal Councils.

"We were at Grand Ronde last year at their beautiful Veteran's Memorial when Kathryn Harrison, who was on their Tribal Council, came up to me and said: "what about Chemawa?" She

was concerned about the students and wanted us to keep Chemawa in mind," James said.

So this time, when the poles made the trip across the United States, Chemawa Indian School was the first of 13 planned stops.

James estimates that over 4,000 hours of work went into carving the poles, with carver Fred Simpson, who accompanied James, working eight hours a day on the poles.

Ellen Fiseher, a Grand Ronde Tribal Elder who has worked at Chemawa for 14 years, said that she thought stopping at Chemawa was one of the most honorable things the Lummis could have done. "I think it's fantastic. They've honored everybody here."

James is traveling with four Northwest Veterans, his family, trip organizers, carvers and two documentary film makers.

Fred Lane, a Lummi who graduated



**A Prayer For Peace**— Hundreds of students touched and put prayers on the Healing Poles when they came to Chemawa, the first of 13 scheduled stops along the route.

in 1986 from Chemawa and is now the editor of the Lummi Tribal newspaper, *Sqol Quol*, has attended each trip making video documentaries.

Lane encouraged kids to "stick it out," and said he has a prayer in his heart for the students of Chemawa.

The poles, called Freedom and Liberty, will be dedicated in a ceremony at the Pentagon on September 19. They will stand at the Chapel in the Historic Congressional Cemetery for a year, and then go to a permanent September 11 memorial on Kingman Island in Washington D.C.

"It's a very long journey, but a beautiful journey, James said. "It's not the Lummi Nation doing it. It's all Nations. At each stop people prayed. Some

prayed with tobacco, some with sage and others with the big drum. All of them sent they're prayers."

Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle Kennedy was at the ceremony and said that she thought it was appropriate for the Lummis to come to Chemawa. Kennedy's father taught there in the 1940's and both her brother and sister were born at the hospital at Chemawa.

"I think it's tremendous," Kennedy said. "In particular being Native Americans, there's a stereotypical image of us as being drunken, uneducated... that we're takers. That's not true. As Native Americans, one of our values is giving and this is a tremendous gift."



**We Care**— Grand Ronde Tribal Council member Valorie Sheker-Robertson and former Tribal Council member Val Grout touch the Freedom and Liberty poles during the trip's first stop at Chemawa Indian Boarding School.