

Circle Of Weaving

WEAVING continued
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with the various basketry techniques of our ancestors and to get them interested in carrying on the tradition," said LaBonte.

About 100 people were in atten-



New Skill — Tribal member Reina Nelson holds up an almost finished cedar hat that she spent the weekend learning how to make. Nisqually-Chehalis Tribal Elder, Evelyn Penn, instructed the Cedar Bark Hat Class.

dance to teach and learn the many techniques of basket weaving. It

was estimated that about 70 percent of those in attendance were Grand Ronde Tribal members.

"It feels so good to be able to come home and learn these things," said Tribal member Carol Logan, who was the Spiritual Advisor for this event. "This has been a wonderful gathering and a very healing time for our people."

There were many types of basket weaving techniques taught over the weekend. Some of these included roots and shoots, tule-cattail, beargrass braiding, juncus, cedar bark hats and wool and hemp. Each class was taught by somebody different including two Grand Ronde Tribal members, Sam Henny and Connie Graves.

Henny taught the wool and hemp session at the gathering.

She began weaving about nine years ago and explained that she



Photos by Toby McClary

Display — Traditional baskets were brought for display by several people at the gathering. This collection is made up of mostly cedar bark and was brought by Nisqually-Chehalis Tribal Elder Evelyn Penn.

learned to make up for a shortage of teachers in the Grand Ronde area. She said that there were about 15 or 20 people in her session ranging from age six all the way up to Elder status.

"All of the people I taught were extremely receptive," said Henny. "I would like the Grand Ronde people to see that there is an art in weaving. People put so much time and spirit into it that weaving truly becomes an art."

There were more attractions to the Circle of Weaving gathering than basket weaving. On Friday and Saturday there was a dinner for all in attendance and on Saturday and Sunday there was a breakfast served.

The Grand Ronde Honor Guard was there on Friday evening to post the colors and some Tribal Council members were there to welcome everyone. Jan Michael Riebach played the Native flute and Tribal Elder Minerva Soucie was there to

give a lecture on the philosophies in basket weaving. There was also an exhibit of finished baskets on display for all to view.

There were many Tribes from across Oregon in attendance at the gathering. In fact, when the Chehalis Tribe called at the last minute and wanted to send 30 members from their Tribe, there was only room for five. They opted to not send anyone rather than choose who could go.

Beginning in January, 2005 there will be a series of basket weaving classes being offered once a month. The focus of these classes will be gathering, processing, weaving and the history of basket weaving.

"I believe this gathering was a huge success," said LaBonte. "It was great to see so many Elders working side by side with young people. I am certain that our ancestors were smiling down on us over the weekend." ■



Photo by Toby McClary

Appreciation — On Wednesday, November 3, the Spirit Mountain Casino's Tribal employees were introduced to Tribal member and new Interim General Manager Mike Larsen. The reason for the meeting was to give appreciation and show recognition to all of the Tribal member employees. "The directors, the board of directors, Tribal Council and I should honor and recognize the success and promotions of Tribal members employed here at Spirit Mountain Casino," said Larsen.



Photo by Peta Tinda

Elder Aerobics Class



Photo by Toby McClary

Let's Dance — Tribal Elders Judy McKnight, left, and Claudia Leno, right, participate with Dee West in Elder aerobics class that is held three times a week in the Grand Ronde Community Center. West is the wife of Tribal Council member Wesley "Buddy" West.

Discussion — Tribal member Dave Brummit of Portland questions the Tribal Council at the Portland Tribal Community Potluck, held on Saturday, November 20. Brummit and other Portland area Tribal members explained to the Tribal Council members present that they would like to be better informed. They also stressed the need for better communication between the council and the membership. More meetings are planned in the near future as a forum for such concerns.