

Grand Ronde Restoration Film Nominated For

■ The story of the people of our Tribe nominated in two categories.

By Marty George

The fight was on as one of the best young actors in Indian Country took center stage at the 3rd Annual Native Voice 2005 Film Festival in Rapid City, South Dakota. Eddie Spears, representing his family and his people of the Lakota Nation/Lower Brule Reservation, stole the show with his stirring portrayal of "Black Cloud" — a Navajo amateur boxer with a chip on his shoulder and

a knockout punch.

This year's festival was a showcase for Native talent, like Eddie Spears and his brother, Michael, as more than 50 films were selected for the event. It was also an opportunity to promote upcoming cinema projects like Turner Network Television's "Into The West."

Many of the Native actors who will star in the epic TNT production were present at the festival, each representing other movies they had made or acted in.

"Grand Ronde Restoration," a film by Tribal member Brent Merrill, was selected for inclusion in this year's event.

"Restoration" tells the story of how the people of many Tribes were forcibly relocated to the Table Rock Indian Reservation and then marched on the Trail of Tears to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation.

The film, which made its debut at the American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco in November of 2004, competed in the Best Modern Cultural Film and Best Short Subject Documentary categories at the festival held May 4-8.

"As a Tribal Council member I felt it was very important to accompany our *Smoke Signals* staff to the showing of our Restoration film," said Valorie Sheker-Robertson. "For the

caliber of people who were present to acknowledge our film for not one but two categories of an award, it's an extreme honor. It was a special time for me to represent our Tribe, our staff and our film at this event and to speak to the value of what Restoration means to us as a once terminated Tribe. Restoration is never to be taken advantage of, as to us it is a sacred thing."

"For me, this film brings back all the important memories of the Tribe," said Tribal Vice Chair Reyn Leno. "This film represents the things we need to teach our children about our history."

"We're the Red," said Grand Ronde Tribal Elder Kathryn Harrison in "Restoration." "And the world needs lots of Red because that's strength."

The festival premiered a number of



Photo by Marty George

Emotional Performance — At the awards ceremony, Native Actor Michael Spears (Lakota/Lower Brule Reservation) sang a lullaby he wrote for his infant son.

Native Voice Film Festival Award Results:

- **"Building Bridges Special Award"** — TNT's "Into the West" accepted by Michael Wright from Turner Television in from L.A.
- **Best Animation** — "Two Winters: Tales from Above the Earth" by director Carol Geddes.
- **Best Traditional Culture Film** — "Amignikum: on sewing boat skins" by director Alice Carron in from Barrow, Alaska.
- **Best Documentary** — Double honor to "Tattoo on my Heart" by director Charles Abourezk and "Team Spirit" from producer Alan Smithee.
- **Best Short Subject Documentary** — "Video Letters from Prison" by filmmaker Milt Lee.
- **Best Drama** — "A Thousand Roads" by Chris Eyre, Scott Garon and Rick West.
- **Best Short Subject Drama** — "Dude Vision" comedy written, directed and starring filmmaker Jon Proudstar.
- **Best Modern Culture Film** — "Seal hunting with Dad" by director Andrew MacLean.
- **Best Actress** — Tantoo Cardinal for "Memory."
- **Best Actor** — Eddie Spears for "Black Cloud."

**The Public Information Office has
"Restoration" videos for sale.**

\$15 for DVD — \$10 for VHS

**For more information or to place an order,
please call Marty at 503-879-1453.**



Photos by Brent Merrill

Local Art — This statue is an artistic reminder of the Native influence in Rapid City. The historic Elks Theater (right) in downtown Rapid City served as home for this year's Native Voice Film Festival.

