



SMOKE SIGNALS

AUGUST 15, 2005

A Publication of the Grand Ronde Tribe

www.grandronde.org

UMPQUA

MOLALLA

ROGUE RIVER

KALAPUYA

CHASTA

Is Leonard Peltier Guilty?

■ After his nearly 30 years in jail, the debate over the innocence of an American Indian icon continues today.

The story of a man; the story of a people.

By Ron Karten

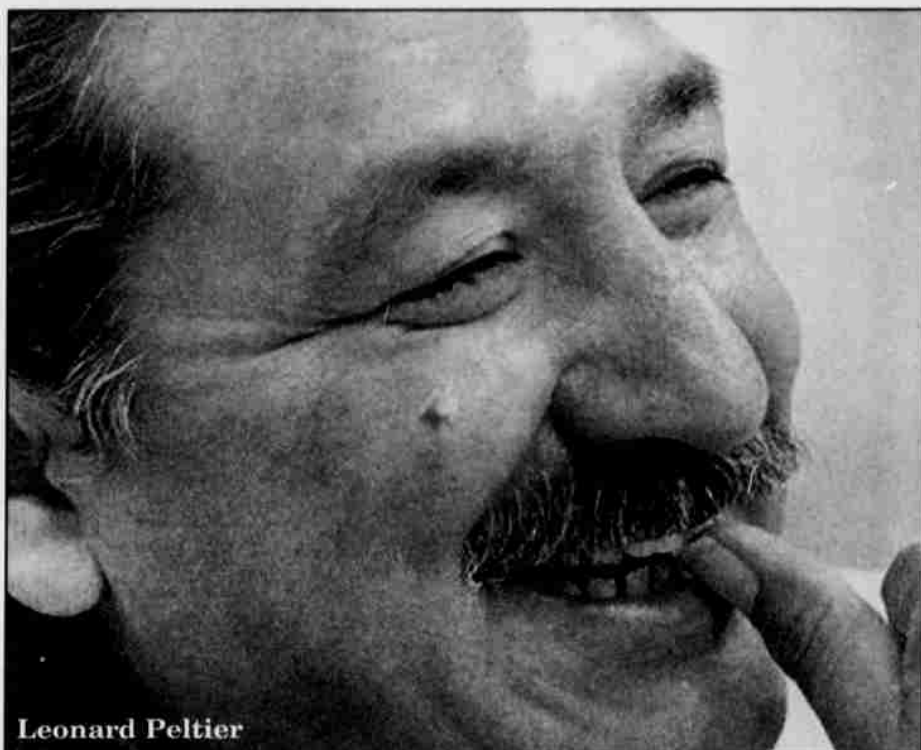
On June 30, Leonard Peltier (Anishinabe, Dakota/Lakota) was unexpectedly moved from the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth to the federal facility in Terre Haute, Indiana.

"He is arbitrarily being held there in solitary confinement indefinitely with the resulting suspension of all his prisoner privileges and basic human rights," reported a website for the Peltier defense committee, LPDC, Inc. www.lpdinc.blogspot.com.

The news about Peltier these days is not as dramatic as it once was, but the larger story of Indian injustice in America is as compelling through this case as it gets. Today, there is no consensus about the role played by Peltier during the shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation on June 26, 1975, a gun battle between members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and a number of police agencies led by the FBI.

Documented in the 1983 book, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* by Peter Matthiessen, and a 1992 film, *Incident at Oglala*, presented by Rob-

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Leonard Peltier

Editor's Note: Like many Natives, I have followed the ongoing saga of Leonard Peltier since I became aware of the case while in college. I have gone from a staunch supporter of the freedom of Leonard to joining the ranks of those who now wonder what the truth really is. Like many of us in Indian Country, I want to believe that he is an innocent pawn in an ongoing struggle for independence from the oppression of the United States government and its misguided policies toward Indians. This story has been years in the making and although the *Smoke Signals* leans towards covering only the local news of the Grand Ronde people, this story is significant and powerful and I have listened to those of you in our community who have continually asked us to look at the bigger picture issues that face all Native people throughout Indian Country. Feature writer Ron Karten has put his heart and soul into this story and I ask you to read it with an open mind.

Dino Butler/Peltier host anti-war conference.

By Ron Karten

On May 15, at what was likely the first Indian anti-war conference in the area, the state of freedom of speech came into question. Top among announcements was one that asked photographers not to photograph the audience, and reporters not to interview audience members "for the comfort and security of event attendees."

Eugene Johnson (Siletz and adopted by Blackfoot Nation), a KBOO radio host and the MCTV cable host of *Native Nations*, said, "Don't be afraid to spread the word. I do it all the time and no one comes knocking on my door."

But not everybody in attendance had been as fortunate. (See related story on front page). One attendee told the story of a family member who had been petitioning for better housing and socialized medicine back in the 1960s. The police came to his home, dragged him away and a year and a half later he returned talking about the government putting chips in his head. He was diagnosed schizophrenic and all these years later, this attendee said, he is now finally able — when well medi-

See **ANTI-WAR** on page 9



Trickster — This photo of a coyote was taken earlier this summer in the Alvord Desert on a dry lake bed near the Oregon/Nevada border. This photo was taken by licensed PPC pilot Barry Smith. Smith is one of only three instructors in the State of Oregon certified to teach how to fly the powered parachutes.

Photo by Barry Smith

Northwest Tribes Participate In The "Healing and Unity Journey"

■ Grand Ronde Tribal members paddle 200 miles by canoe.

By Toby McClary

Cheers from the crowd could be heard throughout Hollywood Beach in Port Angeles, Washington on Monday, August 1, as a procession of more than 60 canoes ended

the 2005 Canoe Journey, "The Paddle to Elwha."

See **CANOE** on page 3



Photo by Toby McClary

The Way To Elwha — Over 70 canoes pulled in to Hollywood Beach in Port Angeles, Washington on Monday, August 1, marking the end of this year's canoe journey "Paddle to Elwha." Members from Grand Ronde joined with Chinook Tribal members paddling over 200 miles beginning at the Squaxin Island Tribe and ending in Port Angeles. The trip took 12 days and Grand Ronde is already planning for next year's journey.



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