

## Chemawa Indian School Birthday Pow-wow



Photos by Toby McClary

**Celebration** — On Saturday, February 18, Chemawa Indian School celebrated their 126th Birthday with an annual pow-wow held in the gymnasium on campus. At right, traditional dancer and Kiowa Tribal member Kiowa Dougherty helped Chemawa celebrate by participating in traditional dances. Above, the Eagle Staff stands proud along with the colors of the many flags.



## Tribe Lends A Helping Hand To Contamination Cleanup

**CLEANUP continued from front page**

to people and wildlife, and devastating to fish and fish habitat."

Thirty-three thousand tons of contaminated soil have been removed from the site and a 23-acre soil cap consisting of 1.2 million pounds of oil-absorbing clay were placed over creosote seeps and 130,000 tons of sand were placed over the remaining contamination. "Some 5.5 acres of riverbank were stabilized with two feet of topsoil and planted with native grasses" late last year, according to the newsletter.

"In October, 2003, I watched as creosote seeped up from my footsteps on this site," said Governor Ted Kulongoski. "Today," he said, "it's clean and appealing."

But Delora Gellar, a geologist who lives up the street with her family and said that they all come down to the shore to run and play, wasn't so sure about how clean the site yet is. "When my dog comes out of that river, he stinks so bad," she said.

Another neighbor came down to see that a boat hull had been removed but laughed when asked if he would now swim in the water. "Are you kidding?" he said.

Creosote continues to turn up at test wells, according to Tribal Biologist Jeff Baker. "They didn't get it all cleaned up yet."

But Baker also noted that the solution is not just in the cleanup. "It also requires changing (public) behaviors," he said. "If you drive a car in a car wash, it recycles the water, but not if you do it yourself."

And he added that Tribal members have more of an incentive than others to clean the water up right and keep it clean. "Tribal members eat more fish than the average American," he said. "And fish coming to our reservation — salmon, steelhead, lamprey eels — come

through here on their way to our reservation."

An *Oregonian* report from last summer said, "In the most sweeping report to date, state and federal authorities say that eating bass, carp and bullhead catfish from Portland

Treating Site along the way as well as many other non-point sources of toxic pollution. I don't think anyone knows how long the fish reside in any of these places. It used to be conventional wisdom that the young out migrants

five or six years in the sediments and because they are very fatty fish, their tissues tend to retain toxic chemicals." And at the same time, she wrote, "companies with perfectly valid and legal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits are discharging toxic pollutants at levels drastically above Oregon water quality criteria (levels designed to protect human health), and are allowed to do so simply because their permit contains a 'mixing zone.' These mixing zones are perfectly legal under the Clean Water Act."

"They'll have to monitor the site for at least 10 years," said Baker, "but our involvement makes it safer for everybody."

"It will always need to be monitored," said Travis Williams, Executive Director of the group, Willamette Riverkeepers. "(But) This is a substantial milestone. It shows the potential that exists in the rest of the harbor for fish and wildlife and people."

"This is just what you want to see at the end of the process," said Williams, "hope and possibility."

The City of Portland provided the trees and shrubs.

"It was a bog of bureaucratic inertia," said Portland City Commissioner Sam Adams. "Now it's an opportunity."

"We have great belief and faith in the Creator," said Cheryl Kennedy, "because he provided all of you today to help us."

"We have to deal with it head on," she added, "and from here forward, we don't let this happen to any other community."

Kennedy gave thanks "to those who bring healing back to this land," and for the only time all day, the audience of about 100 stood up to applaud.

"Let's go plant some trees," said Commissioner Adams. ■

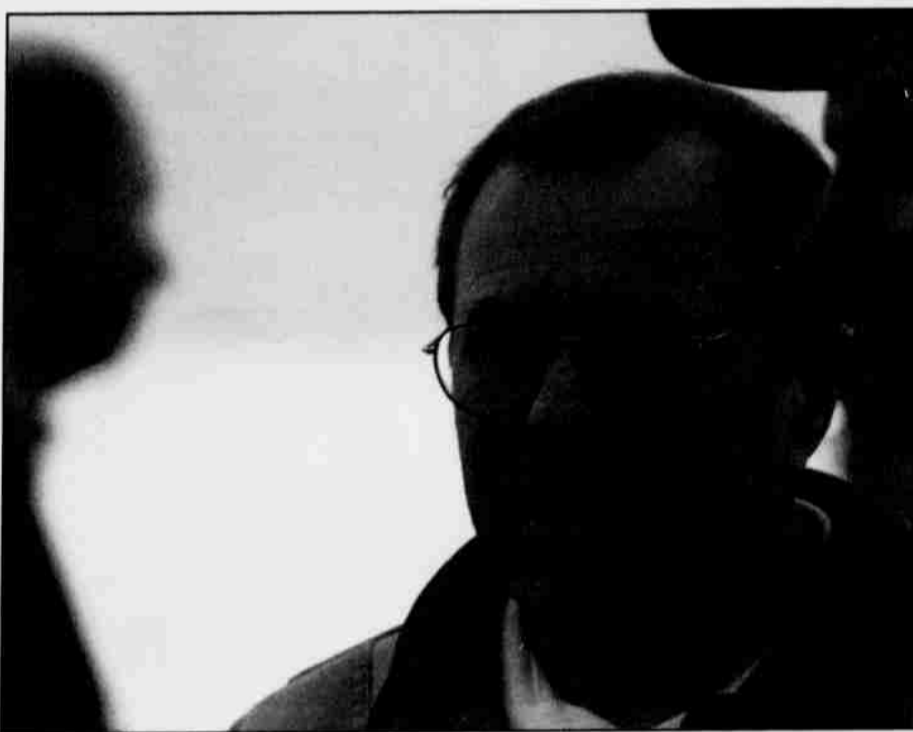


Photo by Toby McClary

**Thankful** — Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski was at the superfund site and gave a speech on the positive aspects of all that is involved. "In October of 2003, I watched as creosote seeped up from my footsteps," said Kulongoski. "Today, it's clean and appealing."

harbor is a health hazard. Children and pregnant women should avoid the fish altogether, and healthy adults should eat them only rarely."

Kathleen Feehan, a Water Quality Policy Analyst with the Umatillas, explained why in an email, "Grand Ronde fish migrate through the Willamette on their way to sea and on their trip back to the Reservation. Along that route they for some period of time are in Portland Harbor (Superfund Site), at Willamette Falls which has substantial mixing zones for toxic chemicals both above and below the falls, encounter the Taylor Lumber &

couldn't take up significant toxics before migrating out to sea, but that is being called into question by some recent research by NOAA Fisheries scientists in Washington. The Pacific lamprey (migratory, not resident fish) harvested by the tribe at Willamette falls and those that migrate out and back to Grand Ronde encounter all of the same sources of toxins. Because of the lamprey's life history, residing in river sediments for long periods, they are more susceptible to taking in the toxic pollutants that they encounter. I have been told lamprey spend as much as