



Photo by Toby McClary

Rest Area — Many Tribal canoes were beached during a day of rest for the canoe families at Suquamish, Washington. Over 60 canoes participated in the journey.

ing and the cheers from the crowd sent chills up my spine. It is no wonder that Northwest Tribes have carried on this tradition for almost 20 years.

This year's canoe journey was like no other. On the tragic day of Wednesday, July 26, the Makah Tribal canoe capsized in five to seven foot swells killing Chief Jerry Jack of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht Tribe. The accident happened in the Strait of Juan de Fuca near Port Angeles around 4 p.m. There were five other people aboard "Hummingbird" three of which were treated for minor injuries and hypothermia.

Rugged shorelines and high winds delayed rescue efforts made by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Jack, 68, of Gold River, British Columbia was an active member of his community as well as the canoe journey according to a press release sent by the Potlatch Fund.

"My dad found himself involved in B.C. land issues," said Colleen Pendleton (Jack's daughter) in the press release. "Lawyers used to touch him for good luck."

Jack's paddle, retrieved by rescue workers, was given to the Makah Canoe Family who carried it with them to the final destination.

An autopsy, performed on Friday, July 28, revealed that Jack had

drowned.

Despite the death of Chief Jack, his family asked that the canoe journey continue to honor him and carry out a tradition that he strongly believed in.

On Monday, July 24, Grand Ronde's Canoe Family began their journey. They pulled out of Neah Bay heading for Clallam Bay early in the morning. On Tuesday, July 25, they left Clallam Bay headed for Elwha. After about 45 minutes of pulling and going over 10-12 foot swells, the U.S. Coast Guard turned them around because of the lack of safety on the water. They put the canoes on trailers and safely made the trip to Elwha where they camped for the night.

They then traveled from Elwha to Old Jamestown on Wednesday where they learned of the drowning of Chief Jack. Thursday was a day of healing for all canoe families.



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Hands On — Tribal members Daniel Haug (l) and Melvin Brisbois pull "Stankiya" to the final destination at Sand Point on Lake Washington.

The families gathered at Sequim High School, formed healing circles and reflected on the accident and on Chief Jack's role in the Northwest Coast culture.

On Friday, they packed up and headed for Port Townsend. They pulled out from Port Townsend on Saturday arriving at Suquamish where they then received a day of



Photo by Toby McClary

Learning Experience — Tribal member Bobby Mercier, surrounded by many Tribal youth, did protocol and shared songs with the numerous other Tribes in attendance.

rest. Suquamish is also where they did their first protocol on the evening of Sunday, July 30. About 40 members of the Grand Ronde and Chinook Canoe Families gathered together singing songs and speaking of the importance of the journey.

Then on Monday, July 31, it was time for the final leg of the 2006 Inter-Tribal Canoe Journey from Suquamish to Sand Point. From Sand Point, the canoes were loaded onto trailers and headed for the Muckleshoot Tribe, about 30 miles. The Muckleshoot Tribe then hosted a celebration of unity that lasted from August 1-5. As part of the celebration, each Tribe was given the opportunity to share songs and dances and speak on their beliefs, traditions and cultures and teach those things to the other Tribes.

About 30 Grand Ronde Tribal members participated in this year's journey. Those who did not pull the canoes, helped with campground cleanup and transporting tents, trailers, food and other items from camp to camp. The ground crew did not have an easy job.

"I took a day off from pulling to give my body some time to recuperate," said Dorsey. "After a day with the ground crew, I was happy to get back in the canoe."

After spending a couple days with the canoe family, it was clear to me that no job was an easy one. These folks were certainly not on a vacation.

If you should happen to see a member of the canoe family you should give them a hug or a massage, they deserve either one. ■



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Before And After — At left, the Hoh Tribe carries their canoe to the launch site in Suquamish as they prepare for their 20 mile paddle to Sand Point. Tribal members Isabella Antanacio and Daniel Garrison wait to be dismissed from Suquamish on Monday, July 30. They were on board a handmade Chinook canoe with several Chinook Tribal members including Tony Johnson. After the 67 canoes reached their final destination spot at Sand Point, the canoes were hauled by trailer to the Muckleshoot Indian Reservation where all canoe families then celebrated their accomplishments over a five-day ceremony beginning on Tuesday, August 1 through Saturday, August 5.