

Tribe Hosts Annual Memorial Day Event In Grand Ronde

By Toby McClary

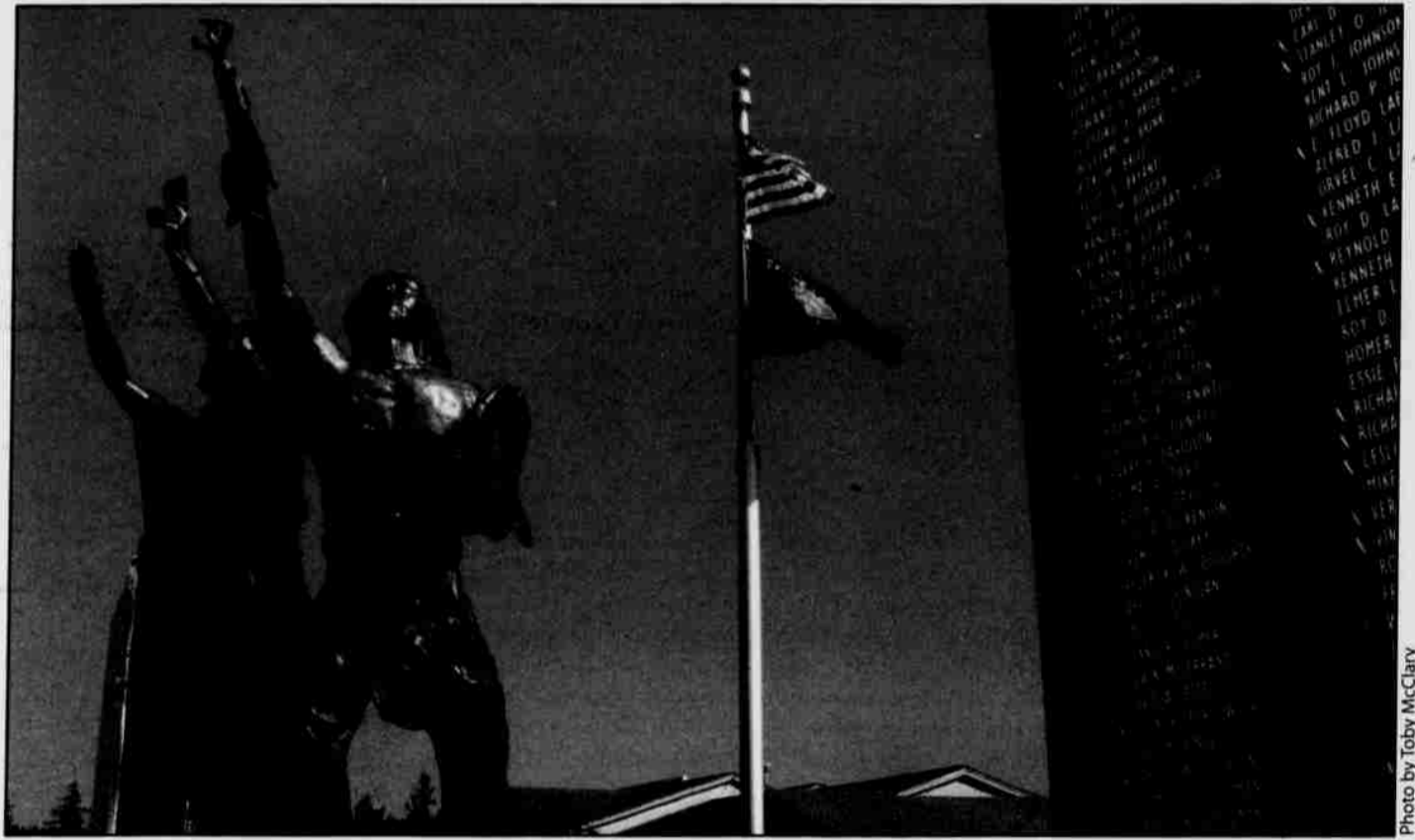
On Memorial Day (May 28, 2007), the Tribe welcomed veterans, families of veterans, community members, and members of Tribal Council for an annual event held to honor those who serve our country and those who have fallen while serving our country.

As part of the ceremony, there was a lunch provided at the Tribe's Community Center. Shortly thereafter, the event moved to the West Valley Veterans' Memorial where some of the guests as well as Tribal leaders spoke to approximately 70 people who were in attendance.

Tribal Council Chair Chris Mercier let his appreciation and gratitude be known to the many people that have sacrificed their lives or "put themselves in a position to make the ultimate sacrifice" for this country.

"For all of you who have risked your lives to assure that people like me can continue what we're doing," said Mercier, "I say thank you from the bottom of my heart. I hope some day I can repay many of you, but until then, have my gratitude and my undying respect," he continued. "People like you make our way of life possible."

Another speaker on the day was Tribal member Brent Merrill who said he spoke about the "people



West Valley Veterans' Memorial

Photo by Toby McClary

behind the people." Merrill went on to explain that there are a number of people who have played significant roles with not only the creation of the Veterans' Memorial but the positive direction the Tribe is headed with all veteran affairs. Some of those on his list included

Tribal Elders Steve Bobb, Marce Norwest, and Gene LaBonte. Merrill's point was that each of them had somebody standing beside them through it all.

"I think that each of them would be the people to tell you that they couldn't have done it without

their wives," said Merrill. "I am proud of our community and I believe that we have created sacred ground with this memorial."

In addition to the daily events, there were recently about 25 new names added to the Veteran's Memorial. ■



Tribal member Brenna Stone, left, and her ace helper, Rosie Ashman, keep the barbecued chicken coming at the Memorial Day BBQ held Wednesday, May 23 at the Elders' Foster Care Facility. Rosie is daughter of Tribal member Ed Ashman and Ellie.

Below, Vernon Kennedy (Burns-Paiute), Health Prevention Specialist for the Tribe, grabs a plate of the good stuff.



Photos by Ron Kartten