

# Tribes set up information tables

**INFORMATION DAY**  
continued from front page

long and wide Capitol steps, where they sat to eat and talk while a pianist played in the building's rotunda.

In concert with the buffets, Tribes set up tables with Tribal information and provided giveaways — casino playing cards, key chains, coasters, shoulder and shopping bags — to the hundreds in attendance.

Grand Ronde Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor and her secretary, Tribal member Kristen Ravia, staffed the Tribe's information table with the help of Spirit Mountain Community Fund employees Shelley Hanson, Jilene Mercier and Kluane Bear. Tribal member and Spirit Mountain Casino employee Angela Sears conducted casino giveaways.

"Welcome to Tribal Information Day," said master of ceremonies Jay Minthorn, an at-large member of the Umatilla Board of Trustees. "Today is about who we are as Indians and what we mean to the state of Oregon. I mean, what the state of Oregon means to the Tribes."

The Grand Ronde Honor Guard and representatives of each Tribe planted Tribal flags at the west-side Capitol steps, among the existing "Walk of Flags" where next year Tribal flags will be added to the permanent collection. The Cow Creeks' Michael Rondo sang "The Star Spangled Banner."

"It's wonderful that the state of Oregon honors these flags," said Armand Minthorn, also an at-large member of the Umatilla Board of Trustees. "We need to work with one another to protect what is important to all of us. Pray in your heart how you've been taught."

"A long time ago, there were no boundaries and no (geographic) lines. We should not let them separate us now."

"I want to emphasize the incredibly long history that this day represents," said Secretary of State Bill Bradbury.

"This year's theme," said Kulongoski, "Honoring, Protecting and Enhancing Cultural and Natural Resources" is a theme that should guide all of our actions inside this building.

"Since time immemorial, the first Oregonians have been faithful stewards of water and other natural resources, and as Oregonians, we should be working to continue that legacy for future generations."

Kulongoski took the opportunity to seek help from the Tribes on questions of "water quality, water supply and conservation. ... Global warming and climate change pose serious threats to our water supply and water quality."

"To address this threat, we need to adopt a comprehensive water strategy that allows us to sustain the region's economy and sustain our way of life."

"In February, we were successful in working together to pass Senate Bill 1069 to address water shortages in the Umatilla Basin. That is only the first step."

"Water issues are among my top priorities for the 2009 legislative session. The state's close cooperation with the Tribes will be a crucial

part of any successful water strategy."

Kulongoski then signed a proclamation naming May 12-18, 2008, American Indian Week.

State Senate Majority Leader Kate Brown reflected on being a member of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services since 1991.

Brown, a longtime friend of Oregon Tribes, won the Democratic primary race for Secretary of State on May 20. She presented a certificate of appreciation to Jay Minthorn and Cow Creek Chairwoman Sue Shaffer.

"When you live this long," Shaffer said, "nice things happen to you."

State District 29 Rep. Chuck Riley read Senate Concurrent Resolution 10.

"That we, the members of the Seventy-fourth Legislative Assembly, mourn the flooding of Celilo Falls and recognize the falls' great importance to the native peoples of Oregon in providing sustenance from the salmon and a gathering place for all Tribes," Riley read.

For state employees, a session on Native graves, looting, treatment of Native American remains and what may be the shortcomings of Oregon's statutory scheme, specifically implementation and enforcement of the statutes, was offered.

After playing a 1981 Oregon Public Broadcasting story about the issue, a panel of experts found many reasons for future Tribal-state cooperation in this area. Experts included Grand Ronde Tribal member and Cultural Resources Department Manager David Lewis; State Historic Preservation Archeologist Dennis Griffin; Oregon State Police Lt. Steve Lane, who specializes in archeological sites and issues; Burns-Paiute Tribal Council Secretary Barbara Sam; and Klamath Tribal Council member Perry Choktoot Jr.

On the question of progress, State



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

**Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski checks out a bracelet worn by Little Miss Grand Ronde Promise Rimer during Tribal Information Day in Salem on Friday, May 16. Grand Ronde Royalty visited with the governor after the ceremony.**

Police see a continual increase in the looting of artifacts. Choktoot said, "Not much has changed since 1981."

Griffin argued that while problems continue to exist, "We've come a long way."

Still needed, Griffin said, is a statewide curriculum to teach students cultural awareness.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has developed guidelines for such a curriculum, said Lewis, but they have not made it to the state level yet.

Meanwhile, the Grand Ronde Tribe, Lewis said, is working to repatriate artifacts and maintain them for future generations.

"It's a pretty vast problem," Lewis said. "The Grand Rondes have a huge land base to oversee and no manpower to cover the whole area. Things slip by even today. A lot of small county museums don't even know the law."

Lane blamed some of the increase in looting on "meth users who would do anything to get money for meth."

The issue stems from Termination, Lewis said, and efforts continue among the Tribes to re-establish a (productive) relationship with state authorities.

In another meeting room, the Umatilla's Jay Minthorn, who chairs the Legislative Commission on Indian Services, showed a 20-minute film about Celilo Falls and led a discussion about the meaning of the falls to Indians, and what the loss of those falls has meant.

But back to Kulongoski and True Rimer.

There was a moment, in Kulongoski's ceremonial office on the Capitol's second floor, when the governor, entertaining children who had come for the festivities, turned to see Tribal member Promise Rimer, 9, sitting in his ceremonial chair behind his ceremonial desk.

"Perfect," Kulongoski said.

He asked Promise's name. She gave him her's, and her brother, True Rimer, who is 10, and her brother, Future Leno, who is 4, and even Courage Leno's name, who passed on in February 2007, not yet a month old. All but Courage, who was not yet enrolled, are Tribal members.

"I love those names," Kulongoski said.

He told the children the story of a young eagle on his property that had been pushed out of its nest, and it didn't quite know how to glide yet.

"You could hear it screeching," he said. Meanwhile, the apparent parents flew above, watching. And a few days later, the governor said, he saw all three flying by, and all were gliding.

"He was nice," True said. "He let us go to his office through a secret door, and sit in his chair."

Still pending, however, is word on that governor-for-a-day business. ■



**Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy watches the Tribal Information Day ceremony on the steps of the State Capitol building in Salem.**