

Reibach receives NAMMY nod for best flutist

Tribal musician wins award at Indian Summer Music Awards

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal member Jan Michael Looking Wolf Reibach garnered yet another nomination from the Native American Music Awards for Flutist of the Year for "Unity."

It's the second nomination Reibach has received recently for the 2007 release. He was named Flutist of the Year by the Indian Summer Music Awards, which were handed out Sept. 5-7 in Milwaukee, Wis., during the Indian Summer Festival, one of the largest Native gatherings in the country with more than 70,000 in attendance.

"This was unexpected and a real honor as the other finalists were very established," Reibach said. "R. Carlos Nakai has sold nearly 3 million CDs and never lost for Best Flutist, and Robert Mirabal was up for his CD which won the Grammy earlier this year. The other two were multiple award-winning performers as well."

Reibach is the only Native flute player to be nominated by both award programs for Flutist of the Year.

"It's an honor to again be recognized by the Native American Music Awards and ISMA," Reibach said. "Thanks to all the fans and my Tribe for the support."

The 10th annual Native American Music Awards will be given out on Saturday, Oct. 4, at Seneca Niagara Casino

and Hotel in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

The public can vote on who wins the award, provided they have a registered e-mail address. People can go to www.votenative.com/vote.cfm, click on "Not a member," register and then vote.

Public voting is 35 percent of award selection process; the other 65 percent is advisory membership votes.

In 2007, Reibach was nominated for Flutist of the Year for the compact disc "Tribute to Flute Makers," but did not win. His competition this year at the NAMMYs includes J.J. Kent (Oglala Lakota) for "I Am Red," Moontee Siquah (Hopi/Choctaw) for "Freedom," Tommy Wildcat (Cherokee) for "Red Fire People," Tim Yett (Cherokee) for "Creating Sacred People" and Xavier Quijas Yxayotl (Huichol) for "The Color of Morning."

Reibach has more than 20 nominations to his credit since 2004.

He also was recently nominated by the Native E-Music Awards for Best Mainstream Song ("Everything to Me"), Contemporary Instrumental ("Wind Jammer") and Remake for his version of Bob Dylan's "Knockin' on Heaven's Door," all of which appear on his new CD "The Looking Wolf Project."

The Native E-Music Awards will be given out Sept. 20 in Albuquerque, N.M. ■



Photo by Raul Vasquez/Special to Smoke Signals

Tribal member Jan Michael Looking Wolf Reibach performed Saturday, Sept. 6, at the Indian Summer Festival held in Milwaukee, Wis. Later in the day, Reibach received the Flutist of the Year Award in the Indian Summer Music Awards for his 2007 CD "Unity."

Mell's Tribal GIS Effort: Federal support reaffirmed

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

When Volker Mell made a presentation in July to Department of Interior Deputy Administrator Jim Cason and U.S. Geological Survey's Karen Cedarellis, rumors were circulating that the Bureau of Indian Affairs was going to stop providing GIS software to Indian Tribes.

The software for using geographic information in useful ways has been commercially available since the early 1970s. The Navajo Tribe was among the first to purchase the software.

In 2002, however, Environmental System Research Institute, a privately-held software company based in Redlands, Calif., made enterprise licenses available to the Department of the Interior at huge discounts, and the BIA has since provided the software free on request to any federally recognized Tribe.

Today, about 260 of almost 600 federally recognized Tribes and nearly 2,000 individual users work with the giant of GIS software.

"It is like the Microsoft of the GIS market," said Mell, who is GIS coordinator for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

"The rumor that we were considering cutting funding to this program," said a BIA source who declined to be named, "I have no idea where that started. That was never in question."

"We keep our ear to the ground," said ESRI International/Northwest Federal Account Manager David Gadsden, "and we wanted to see what happens when these enterprise licenses were renegotiated."

The negotiations are due to be concluded any day now, he said.

"It seemed to us that anytime you go into a negotiation, everything is on the table," Gadsden said. "For whatever reason, we had gotten the impression that continuation

of licenses could be in question."

In response, ESRI and Tribal representatives like Mell put together a pre-emptive strike. Grant Timentwa (Muckleshoot) wrote a survey that went out to 30 different Tribal communities asking about the importance of GIS in the community, the number of licenses granted and how they were being used.

Mell joined Timentwa and representatives of the Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska in presentations designed to show the software's many uses for Tribes. Many submitted maps they had made with the GIS software.

Gadsden took these presentations and put together a slick 63-page book called, "Tribal GIS, Supporting Native American Policies with GIS."

Maps presented by Mell and other representatives of the Grand Ronde Tribe included one covering the Tribe's ceded lands and usual and accustomed areas in Oregon, Washington and California and another showing the areas where different Native languages were spoken in western Oregon.

Here in Grand Ronde, the GIS software finds uses in Cultural Resources, Planning, Natural Resources and Lands departments.

"We have 12 to 14 who use GIS software in their jobs," Mell said.

Mell also provides GIS training to Grand Ronde staffers.

"For my programs," said Eirik Thorsgard, the Tribe's Cultural Resources Protection Coordinator, "it's absolutely invaluable. We track state, federal and Tribal archeological and cultural sites across our ceded lands and our usual and customary places. I use it for

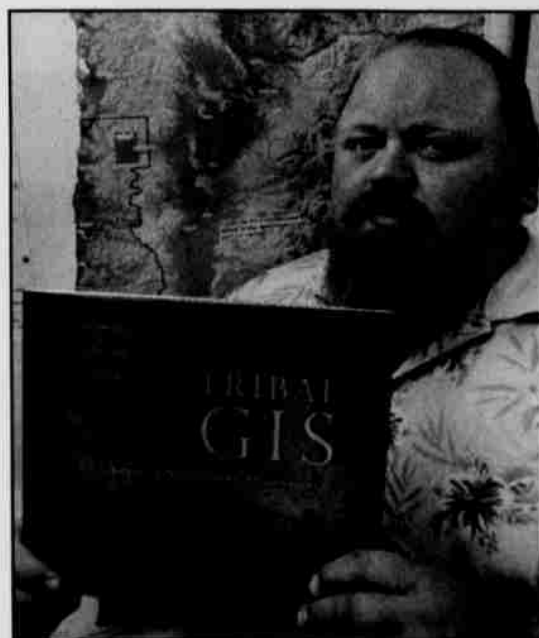


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Volker Mell, GIS coordinator for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, displays a copy of the book "Tribal GIS, Supporting Native American Policies with GIS." The book contains examples of two maps, one of which is behind Mell, that were made using GIS software provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs that the Tribe uses to make maps.

every permit evaluation. It would be almost impossible to do our job without that program."

"We use it every day for our timber sales," said Tribal forester Jason Bernards. "We use it to correct any lines that were mapped before GIS came around in full swing, about 10 years ago. Our main objective is our exhibit for our timber sales. We need accurate special information showing acres, streams, roads."

"The Tribe also uses it to make sure we're in compliance with our environmental regulations; stream buffer widths, for example. We're going back and monitoring to make sure we stay the proper distance

from the streams."

For the GIS book, the Lummi of northern Washington provided a map showing the 2007 Intertribal Canoe Journey routes.

The Nisqually's map showed geoduck tracts within the Medicine Creek Treaty Tribe's usual and accustomed fishing area. Geoducks are the largest burrowing clams in the world and extremely valuable. The Tribe's shellfish program uses this information to manage the geoduck fishery for individual harvesters.

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians in Palm Springs, Calif., uses its GIS software to develop a land status map for economic development. The Skagit River System Cooperative in La Conner, Wash., tracks forest practices and allows for identification of such resources for their protection.

The Squaxin Island Tribe uses its GIS software to track Deschutes River bank erosion. The Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission uses the software to track steelhead distribution within the John Day River subbasin.

The uses of the software are so widespread that many small Tribes have hired GIS personnel.

Warm Springs has four or five, according to Mell. Coquille has three, and Siletz and Grand Ronde have one each. The Flatheads in Montana have six and the Couer d'Alene Tribe in Idaho has more than 10.

The BIA paid almost \$700,000 for Tribal licenses this year, and according to the agency, support for the program remains strong.

"From our perspective," said the BIA source, "the book represented the highlight, the excellent work, the important work taking place in the Tribal communities. Again from our perspective, I want to emphasize our unwavering support for that work." ■