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# Smoke Signals

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UMPQUA ■ MOLALLA ■ ROGUE RIVER ■ KALAPUYA ■ CHASTA



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

## Tribal Elder Steve Rife repeats Trail of Tears trek

By Ron Karten  
*Smoke Signals staff writer*

**T**ribal Elder Steve Rife is at a rest stop a little north of Sutherlin, which itself is about 120 miles and a five-day walk north of Table Rock near Medford.

Rife's in the midst of making his third commemorative walk from Table Rock to Grand Ronde. He is walking up Interstate 5, approxi-

mating the actual route of the Applegate Trail. Today, Applegate Trail is better known as the Trail of Tears that brought several Tribes and Bands from southern Oregon's Umpqua Basin and Rogue River Valley together for a 33-day, 263-mile march in 1856 to what has become the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon.

Settlers here and there along the way set up ambushes to kill Natives, according to a diary of the forced march written by Indian Agent George Ambrose, who escorted them to Grand Ronde.

Rife relives some of the memories of those times.

**As two tractor-trailers drive past him, Tribal Elder and veteran Steve Rife walks mile 143 of Interstate 5 north in Douglas County on Wednesday, July 1, during his Trail of Tears walk.**

"They're throwing (expletive) at me, like they do every year, but I just stay right there," Rife says.

He's been out on the highway, on the outside

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## Veterans' make best of new setup

**More than 1,000 attend three-day event at Uyxat Powwow Grounds**

By Ron Karten  
*Smoke Signals staff writer*

**O**n Friday, July 10, as final preparations were being made for the 2009 Veterans' Powwow, Tribal member Frank Hostler was arriving in Iraq for his second tour of duty, said his mother, Tribal Elder Linda Olson.

"There are lots of troops coming and going now," Olson said.

For the veterans at home, it was spectacular weather all Friday afternoon. Warm and breezy until

around 6:30 p.m. when bolts of lightning and thunder crackled across the sky.

"They could have given us some warning," said Tribal Housing Authority Housing Services Specialist Deb Kroeker, who staffed the Housing booth this year, showing the array of environmentally sound products now available through the department.

The Culture Committee advertised a program of speakers coming to Grand Ronde to discuss ways of

saving water.

The weather hop-scotched all weekend from beautiful to dark and cloudy to torrential rains that drove everybody under the big tent for the last two hours of the powwow on Sunday.

Inside the tent, dancers had a thick carpet of grass on which to work their magic. The beautiful green stretched beyond the tent to include most of the vendors' booths.

Drummers were moved to center

stage this year. Master of ceremonies Nick Sixkiller (Oklahoma Cherokee) called it "Oklahoma-style." It made more room for spectators and the sound system was reconfigured to accommodate the new arrangement.

Tribal member and Tribal Audio-Video Network Technician Wendell Olson and his team put in 12 man-hours to make the new arrangement work. Heavy wires were hoisted over the first level of tent

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