

Homecoming



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member and Grand Ronde Canoe Family member Nick Atanacio sings and drums as other members sing, drum and dance during the Canoe Family's welcoming home meeting from the 2009 Tribal Canoe Journey in the Tribal Community Center on Friday, Nov. 6. In addition to singing and dancing, dinner was served and stories and photos from the journey were shared.

2009 Tribal Marketplace dates

■ Dec. 4-6, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dates subject to change due to conflicting Tribal or SMC events. Located across from Cedar Plank Buffet.

CULTURAL GATHERINGS

■ NOV. 20-22: **NATIVE AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL.** Chinook Winds Casino, 1777 N.W. 44th St. **LINCOLN CITY, OR.**

■ NOV. 22: **CTGR 26TH RESTORATION CELEBRATION.** Tribal Gymnasium, 9615 Grand Ronde. **GRAND RONDE, OR.**

■ JAN. 23, 2010: **ANNUAL TRADITIONAL WINTER POWWOW.** Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus, 12000 S.W. 46th Ave. **PORTLAND, OR.** 503-977-4112.

■ MAR. 6, 2010: **EVERGREEN & BATTLE GROUND SD'S TITLE VII POWWOW.** Covington Middle School, 11200 N.E. Rosewood Ave. **VANCOUVER, WA.**

If you or anyone you know has information on cultural events happening, Smoke Signals would be glad to list it in our Cultural Gatherings. Please e-mail news@grandronde.org or write to Smoke Signals, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

Over 25 different agencies involved

ROAD continued from front page

described as "key players."

"I had a lot of help along the way," Scott said.

Major renovations included a new water main on the south end of the project, new sanitary sewer main, storm sewers and telecommunications all placed below ground for the \$6.4 million project. The roadway embankment was completely rebuilt and a cantilevered sidewalk was installed on the bridge over the South Yamhill River.

In addition, sidewalks and crosswalks were installed, improving safety for area pedestrians.

It was a road so full of utility sub-projects that contractor C&M Construction Vice President Bill Sproul called it "a utility project wrapped up in a road."

And residents living along Grand Ronde Road faced the rumbling of trucks and sound of horns on a daily basis for more than a year. At one point during the ceremony, Sproul expressed his appreciation for the patience shown by residents.

"Doing the construction is fairly straightforward," he said. "It's another thing to do it and keep the community going."

Also singled out for praise was Tribal Planning & Grants Development Manager Kim Rogers, who was instrumental in securing funding for the project, and Tribal attorneys who worked with an array of different contracts to make this happen.

"We cobbled together a lot of different funding sources," Scott said.

Bureau of Indian Affairs Regional Director Stanley Speaks and engineer John La Verdure attended the ceremony.

"It's tremendous it was able to come together," said Speaks. "This

is just a major improvement."

ESA Adolfson's senior scientist Sarah Hartung and project scientist Michelle Lennox also attended.

"This is a day we've been waiting for for a long, long time," said Hartung.

ESA Adolfson worked with the Tribe to ensure the project complied with environmental regulations.

Project engineer David Reece said, "What a beautiful day to see the culmination of a great vision for safety in the community. It makes us all proud to have participated."

"We're very blessed to have someone with the vision of Eric Scott. There's not a finer man, or one with better credentials."

Oregon Department of Transportation's Region 3 manager Don Jordan praised the effort as did Polk County Commissioner Mike Propes, who said that he'd found himself in the ditch on the side of Grand Ronde Road in the years before the project took shape.

"We have been so impressed with Tribal leadership," said Propes. "We thought the Tribe could do a fantastic job (taking the lead) and you saw it today. You're a leader in our nation. I'm so proud to be a partner with you."

In a written congratulatory statement, Yamhill County Commissioner Leslie Lewis said, "It is very exciting to see this project completed. You truly have transformed the area, improved the safety for the school children, and provided a great way to link your community with the new sidewalks. Yamhill County was pleased to play a role in helping you accomplish this fabulous project."

"This was a very complex project with a lot of stakeholders and a lot of issues" said Scott. As project manager, Scott coordinated participation of numerous county, state and federal agencies.



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Engineer Eric Scott, second from left, gifts Pendleton blankets to David Reece, left, Jesse White, middle, and Holli Pick, right, during the reception in the Governance Center Atrium after the Grand Ronde Road ribbon cutting. Reece, owner of Reece & Associates Inc., was the engineer of record for the project; White was the lead design engineer; and Pick was the project manager for construction and owner's representative. White and Pick both work for Reece & Associates.

"Between design, plan review, funding, utility coordination, environmental compliance and permitting, there were over 25 different agencies involved," Scott said.

From the east, as you come to Grand Ronde Road on Salmon River Highway, a locally made caution sign reads, "Children are everywhere."

That has never changed, and it goes a long way to explaining why so many worked so long and hard to make the new road possible.

"The new road," said Tribal member Bobby Mercier, "is safer for our children and our community here. Our ancestors are looking out for us."

Mercier is a member of the Grand Ronde Canoe Family drum group that played in honor of the project's completion.

"Any day you can help protect

our community kids is a good day," said Tribal Council member Toby McClary.

"I've been walking on this road since I was 5," said Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg. "And I live here again. Until this road was finished, I lived with fear in my heart for the life of the kids."

Tribal Council Vice Chair Reyn Leno also remembers growing up in Grand Ronde and the gradual improvements to Grand Ronde Road.

"We used to have to run from the fir trees past the cemetery up to wine alley," he said during a reception in the Governance Center Atrium that followed the ribbon-cutting ceremony on the road.

"It was a wooden bridge over the river. Then it was updated to a cement bridge. I wonder what folks back then would think of this road today?" ■