

# Grand Ronde dancers take five prizes

By Ron Karten  
Smoke Signals staff writer

One hundred-ninety competition dancers, almost 20 visiting drums and five in-the-money finishes for Grand Ronde Tribal dancers.

That's the short version. There also was a traditional wedding and a 50th wedding anniversary party at the 2011 Grand Ronde Contest Powwow this year held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds near Fort Yamhill State Park.

Dances honored Elders who have walked on. The Tribe hosted guests from as far away as Costa Rica, and the Tribe's only member living in Vermont came for a visit.

Saturday afternoon for Grand Entry, dancers circled until they were three deep under the tent at Uyxat Powwow Grounds. The stands were so packed, not a seat was available. The temperature hit 95 degrees.

Tribal Culture Committee Chairwoman Kathleen Provost and committee member Carol Logan, both Tribal Elders, staffed the committee's vendor booth, back again with information about the international Peace & Dignity Journey, which is inspired by an ancient prophecy of the Eagle and the Condor coming together.

Willy Towner, a Siletz Tribal member with Vivette, Logan and LaBonte families in his bloodline, displayed traditional crafts and materials in the booth. He offered background information to the many people who came by.

"How does one learn to make a hat like this?" asked one visitor, referring to a cedar flat-topped hat.

"Find a good teacher," Towner told her.

The Culture Committee also staffed the wire recycling bins



Tribal member Marcel Allen Jr. dances his way to first place in the Junior Boys Grass category during the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde 2011 Contest Powwow at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Saturday, Aug. 20.

Mountain Lodge "who are exceptional during powwow," running shuttle buses to the powwow, as well as Carter Tollas, Marketing production assistant, and Tribal member Jocelyn Huffman, sponsorship coordinator, both for Spirit Mountain Casino.

Patrolling the powwow grounds and Reservation this weekend were Luke Puerini, Jeremy Bailey, Bryan Fendall, John Koonce, Andrew Puerini, Brooks Wakeland, Jim Pinder and Richard Nelson. Members of the patrol group drove the engine in the parade at Fort Yamhill State Park on Saturday.

"We don't thank these people enough," said Ainam.

"Everything!" said Bonnie Mercier, a Tribal Elder and leader of this year's Royalty, in answering what's special about this year's group.

Grand Ronde 2011-12 Royalty Court includes Nakoosa Moreland, Senior Miss; Iyana Holmes, Junior Miss; Amelia Mooney, Little Miss; and princesses Amaryssa Mooney, Elizabeth Watson Croy and Makenzie Aaron, all members of the Tribe.

"It's definitely a teamwork group of girls," said Reina Nelson, a Tribal member and longtime Royalty leader. "They're all special girls and they all deserve it. They worked hard all year, travelling and representing their Tribe, and making their Tribe proud."

Community member Christina Mercier made crowns for Royalty.

"It's always an honor to bead the crowns for the Royalty," she said. "This year, I really wanted to make the girls proud to wear them. Holding back the sorrow of Dean's passing, I needed to put a lot of prayer into them. With the vision of the girls wearing them, I was able

throughout the powwow grounds, recycling what they could and returning deposit bottles to add to the committee's budget.

"The support accounting crew, fa-

cilities crew, community and Tribal members who volunteered, the Grand Ronde Color Guard, Kristi DeLoe and her crew, preparing and serving meals during powwow — it takes all of us to make this a success," said Dana Ainam, a Tribal member and longtime organizer of the Contest Powwow.

Ainam went on to add her thanks to West Valley Fire District employees, Polk County Sheriff's Office personnel, ProStar staff, Susan Reyes and the valet group at Spirit



Tribal member Ethan Sabin dances during the 1 p.m. Grand Entry of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde 2011 Contest Powwow at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Saturday, Aug. 20.

to complete the crowns just in the nick of time."

Nakoosa's mother, CeCe Kneeland, also a Tribal member, and her family invited Tribal members to a Prayer Song Giveaway on Saturday afternoon.

Also that afternoon, powwow leaders held a dance special in honor of the late Patricia Ike (Yakama), who passed on just before last year's powwow.

A dance honored Korea and Vietnam veteran Louie Pacheco, who passed on during powwow weekend.

That night, the Canoe Family held a full dress exhibition in the Tribal Plankhouse. Those who participated included Tribal members Kyoni Mercier, Andrea Grijalva, Kayla Grijalva, Kimberly Roybal, Santiago Atanacio, Nick Atanacio, Kalene Contreras, Kimberly Contreras, Bobby Mercier, Kai Kanim Mercier, Jacob Holmes, Tammy Fisher, Nako Mercier, Izaiah Fisher, SuSun Fisher, Cristina Lara, Carmella Rojas, Lisa Leno, Mataya Holmes, Tianna Holmes, Dana Leno-Ainam, Justice Ainam, Nya Ainam, Anesia Ainam, Janel Lara, Jenevieve Davis, James Davis, Alexis Contreras, Damien Findley, Chris Contreras, Beryle Contreras, Brian Krehbiel, Kailiyah Krehbiel, Ali Holsclaw, Zoey Holsclaw, Teri Mercier, Kaleigh Simi, Shannon Simi, Dominik Briant, Shannon Stanton, Lio Norwest and Shantell Ulestad.

At the Tribal Housing Authority booth, Housing Services Specialist Deborah Kroeker had the site plan for Elders' Housing Phase II available.



Wearing Traditional regalia, Tribal member Deitrich Peters dances during Grand Entry of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde 2011 Contest Powwow at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Friday, Aug. 19.

## Photos by Michelle Alaimo

The Community Health Plan's Diabetomic Health Group tested 75 members from the Shasta Health Plan at the powwow over the weekend, said Wellness Program Manager Bonnie Mercier, wearing yet another hat at powwow.

Diabetomic tests read momentary and long-term blood sugar levels, but also provide information on overall kidney, pancreas, heart and liver functions in a convenient,

easy-to-read report that can be shared with your primary care physician.

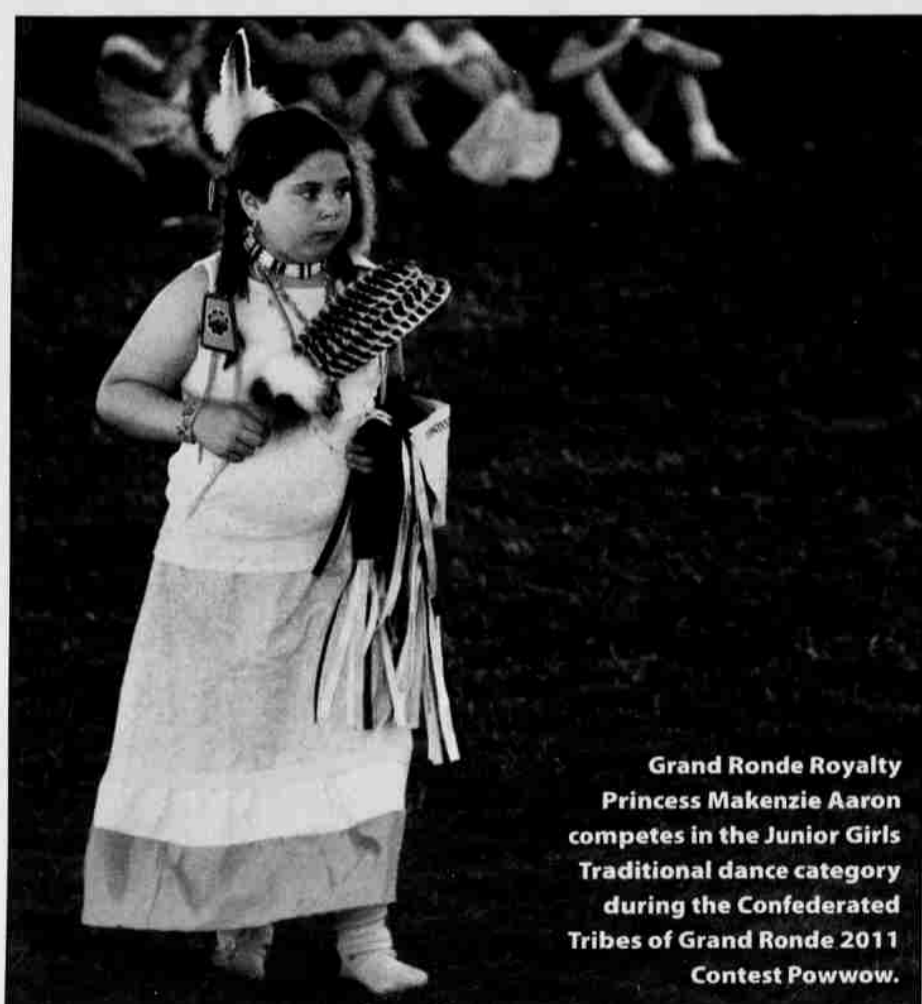
At the Wellbriety Movement booth, Tribal Elder Margo Ordaz reported that a local Recovery Talking Circle is almost ready to start providing services in Grand Ronde.

"We hope to be treating families by the first of the year," she said.

The group has temporary quarters in the Saddle Club building, where the Grand Ronde Food Bank used to be, beyond the community garden at the end of Bunnsville and over the little wooden bridge.

Related, the Portland-based Native American Rehabilitation Asso-

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Grand Ronde Royalty Princess Makenzie Aaron competes in the Junior Girls Traditional dance category during the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde 2011 Contest Powwow.



Tribal Chairwoman Cheryl A. Kennedy gives a welcome speech to a full arena during the 1 p.m. Grand Entry of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde 2011 Contest Powwow at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Saturday, Aug. 20.