

Merrill documenting Lummi Healing Pole journey

Event will commemorate 9/11 attacks, help survivors heal

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

Tribal member Brent Merrill is producing video and still photography for the Lummi Nation's 10th anniversary Healing Pole journey across the nation that will commemorate the 9/11 attacks on U.S. soil.

Merrill also is serving as the project's media liaison.

"My role is to film everything and shoot still photography along the journey as well as to be a liaison to the media who will attend and cover each blessing ceremony along the way," he said.

"He's the man," said Kurt Russo, director of the Native American Land Conservancy, the group organizing this latest totem pole journey. "We searched high and low for a Native journalist and someone handy with a camera. We did a national search, and selected Brent because of his experience, his passion and, obviously, his ability as a journalist."

Russo also directed the last healing pole excursions for the Lummi Nation.

Ten years ago, the Lummi, located in the far Northwest corner of Washington state, sent three healing poles carved by master carver and Lummi Elder Jewell Praying Wolf James and his House of Tears carvers across the country to honor the fallen of 9/11 and to

help the healing process for those who survived.

For the 10th anniversary of the event, Jewell and his carvers created another pole, this one 20-feet high. On Monday, Sept. 12, the Healing Pole Journey 2011 began with the first blessing ceremony at Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine, Wash.

The pole will travel from there to the Seattle Center and then across the country through Montana, Wyoming, the Dakotas, Minnesota and other stops on the way to New York City, where on Sept. 30 the Lummi will hold a ceremony with the families of 9/11 victims at Arrow Park. Merrill's photography will be on display there.

The pole will be blessed by 12 different Tribes along the way.

The project is funded by Bethesda, Md.-based National Library of Medicine, part of the National Institutes of Health, and on Oct. 5 the pole will be raised at its final stop on the journey, a healing garden at the National Institutes of Health.

"It will be part of an exhibit that will display Native peoples' concepts of health and illness," Russo said.

"This is a trip of a lifetime for me," said Merrill, who is a former editor of *Smoke Signals*. "I'm honored to be asked to do this. I'm super stoked to be a part of something so amazing." ■

Cascade Crossing Oral History Project

Grand Ronde's Site Protection Program, in The Cultural Resources Department, is seeking Tribal members who have:

1. Hunted
2. Fished
3. Gathered
4. Participated in other traditional practices within the vicinity of:

- Detroit, OR
- Breitenbush Hot Springs
- Olallie Lake
- Molalla Table Rock
- Silver Falls
- Santiam State Forest

We are seeking information on our people's connection to the land in these areas both past and present. Information collected will be used by the Tribe in confidential consultation with state and federal agencies regarding proposed and future development in these areas.

If you have information or know someone who does about our people's traditional use of the areas stated above, past or present, please contact the Tribe's Cultural Protection Specialist David Harrelson at 503-879-2320 or by e-mail at david.harrelson@grandronde.org. ■

Medicare Part B reimbursement notice for Tribal members

If you are a Grand Ronde Tribal member, have reached the age of retirement (65) or have started to receive Social Security Retirement or disability benefits through Social Security (SSD), you may be eligible to receive Medicare Part B benefits through the Tribe. To find out if you are eligible, or to get enrolled in Medicare Part B, please do the following: call toll-free 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or go online at www.medicare.gov. You will need to request an application for enrollment in Medicare Part B and return it to your local Social Security Office. Once you are enrolled in Medicare Part B through Social Security, you will need to call our office to request a Medicare Part B Reimbursement packet to apply. As a Grand Ronde Tribal member, the Tribe will reimburse your Medicare Part B premium each month at the standard rate.

Note: If you are currently on the Skookum Tribal Health Plan it is required that you accept Medicare Part B when you become eligible. By not accepting Medicare Part B, your coverage for medical expenses could be drastically reduced.

If you need a Medicare Part B reimbursement packet sent to you or have any questions regarding the Tribe's reimbursement program, please call Reina Nelson in Member Services at 503-879-2223 or toll-free at 1-800-422-0232, ext. 2223. You may call Barbara Steere with questions regarding our Skookum Tribal Health Plan coverage at 503-879-2487 or toll-free at 1-800-749-2928. ■

Saddle Club open

The Grand Ronde Saddle Club is now on summer hours and is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily near the former Grand Ronde Food Bank site west of Grand Ronde Road.

Everyone is invited to visit the horses and go for a ride.

For more information, contact Clint Folden at 503-559-1977, LeLani Folden at 503-438-5414 or Barbara Clark at 503-507-9107. ■



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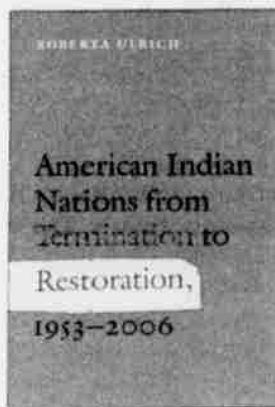
American Indian Nations from Termination to Restoration, 1953-2006

Roberta Ulrich

When the U.S. government ended its relationship with dozens of Native American tribes and bands between 1953 and 1966, it was engaging in a massive social experiment. Congress enacted the program, known as termination, in the name of "freeing" the Indians from government restrictions and improving their quality of life. However, removing the federal status of more than nine dozen tribes across the country plunged many of their nearly 13,000 members into deeper levels of poverty and eroded the tribal people's sense of Native identity. Beginning in 1973 and extending over a twenty-year period, the terminated tribes, one by one, persuaded Congress to restore their ties to the federal government. Nonetheless, so much damage had been done that even today the restored tribes struggle to overcome the problems created by those terminations a half century ago.

Roberta Ulrich provides a concise overview of all the terminations and restorations of Native American tribes from 1953 to 2006 and explores the enduring policy implications for Native peoples. This is the first book to consider all the terminations and restorations in the twentieth century as part of continuing policy while detailing some of the individual tribal differences. Drawing from Congressional records, interviews with tribal members, and other primary sources, Ulrich delves into the causes and effects of termination and restoration from both sides.

Roberta Ulrich is a retired newspaper reporter. She is the author of *Empty Nets: Indians, Dams, and the Columbia River*.



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