

Four of Oregon's Tribes hosted event

POWWOW continued
from front page

for the Coquille Indian Tribe; and Wayne Chulik (Tlinget).

In the second grand entry row was Grand Ronde Tribal Police Sgt. Jake McKnight carrying in the POW-MIA flag.

Grand Ronde Tribal Council members came later, including Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr., Secretary Toby McClary, Jon A. George, Cheryle A. Kennedy and Chris Mercier.

Also participating in grand entry from the Grand Ronde Tribal Council, but entering among veterans, was June Sherer. Steve Bobb Sr. stood on the podium for his welcome.

"We come together once again to celebrate and share with our neighbors the sounds of the culture of our past and today," said Bobb.

Veterans were honored following the grand entry procession.

"When they come home," said master of ceremony Nick Sixkiller (Siletz), "the war is not over. They still need our help."

Tribal Royalty welcomed the crowd. Royalty included Senior Miss Grand Ronde Kiana Leno, Junior Miss Grand Ronde Kailiyah Krehbiel, Little Miss Grand Ronde Kaleigha Simi, Junior Miss Princesses Amelia and Amaryssa Mooney, and Elizabeth Watson-Croy.

Four of Oregon's five federally recognized western Tribes - Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians and Coquille Indian Tribe - hosted this year's gathering.

With Eastern Oregon Tribes, Native Americans and the general public all invited, this year's event attracted tour busses in the beginning that "wiped out the vendors," said Sixkiller. When the tour busses



Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. gives a welcome speech at the fifth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Salem Pavilion at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem on Saturday, Jan. 26. On the left is Nick Sixkiller, master of ceremony for the event.

left, the overcrowded Salem Pavilion finally had breathing room for the late afternoon and evening.

"They also cleaned out the ATMs," said Siobhan Taylor, Public Affairs director for the Grand Ronde Tribe and coordinator of the event.

At one point, the three Fairgrounds food vendors had one- to two-hour waits for fry bread and hot dogs, and then, all of a sudden, no lines at all. One hot dog vendor said that business this year "quadrupled" sales from previous years.

Among some 48 vendors, Elder Linda Olson said, "We paid (the \$50 fee) for our table in the first 20 minutes." By mid-afternoon, she said, business was double that of previous years.

For vendor Michael Bolton, the story was reversed. He was making about half of last year's receipts early in the afternoon, but he added, "Things are picking up."

The gathering's theme was Celebrating Healthy Traditions, said Taylor. Beaverton-based DiabetOmics staffed a booth on the main floor, alongside many Tribal booths showing crafts, canoes and traditional Native games.

Jordan Mercier, Greg Archuleta, Jon A. George, Debi Anderson, her son, Eric Bernardo, and Elder Dolores Parmenter, as well as Greg Robinson and his son, Justin, who are Chinook, staffed the Grand Ronde Tribe's display of carving, beading, color- and basket-making crafts.

The Grand Ronde Tribe also was represented by the Canoe Family, which drummed and danced. A blanket dance fundraiser brought in \$700 for the group's activities.

Though the Confederated Tribes of Siletz chose not to participate officially this year, members of the Tribe were on hand. Among them, Willie Townner manned a canoe project that will honor Tribal ancestors killed during the Rogue River War.

Salem residents Michael Kempf (Blackfoot/Cherokee) and Angela Nevius brought their children to teach them about their Native heritage, said Nevius.

"It's cool," said daughter Alyssa,

"The girls wanted to see the dancers," said Stephanie Jensen of Kaiser in explaining how the family of six came to the event.

Tony Whitehead was Arena Director.

Seventeen drums included The Woodsmen, Little River, Star Horse, West Coast Boyz, Thundering Water, Bulls & Bears, All Nations, Johonaai, Turquoise Pride, Splacta Alla, Wocus Bay, Four Directions, Spring Ridge, Medicine Water, War Party, Ahnii Nijii and Wy'East.

Traditional dance specials for men and women held during the afternoon and into the evening included Women's Traditional won by Sisiley Scott (Warm Springs); Men's Traditional won by Kelly Sixkiller (Cherokee of Oklahoma), son of emcee Nick Sixkiller; Golden Age won by Linda Meanus (Umatilla); Men's Golden Age won by Abbey Summers (Klamath); Men's Father/Son, won by Mark McNair and his grandson, Kadai McNair (Klamath). The winner of the Women's Mother/Daughter was the same duo as last year, Sixkiller said, "but they grabbed the prize



Grand Ronde Tribal Police Sgt. Jake McKnight carries the POW-MIA flag during grand entry of the fifth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Salem Pavilion at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem on Saturday, Jan. 26.

Visit the Tribe's
facebook
page to see more photos

and ran, the same as last year, and we didn't get their names."

Tribal blankets and a baskets filled with gifts were prizes.

Apache Crown Dancers from Chemawa Indian School in Salem also danced for the crowds.

The first Gathering of Nations Powwow, held in January 2009, coincided with the 150th anniversary of Oregon statehood. Held before the statehood celebration, it served to remind Oregonians that the Tribes lived here long before

statehood and the event has since celebrated the sovereignty and culture of Oregon Tribes.

As at previous powwows, "Standing Strong," a video story of the five western Tribes, was shown in a side room at the pavilion.

Information from individual Tribes highlighted individual Tribal histories.

"It was just a feel good powwow," said Sixkiller. "Good energy, good drums. There was the fantastic sight of beautiful dancers."

"I think the Women Elders touched my heart the most," he added, "with their pride and dignity. It does your heart good to see our Elders out there dancing."

Taylor was assisted by Acting Public Affairs Secretary Chelsea Clark and Page Designer Justin Phillips in setting up the pavilion for the powwow on Friday, Jan. 25. Others lending help included

Portland Office Tribal Services Representative Lisa Archuleta and her son, Miguel Adams, and Cultural Resources Manager Kathy Cole and her staff, as well as Museum Curator David Lewis. ■



Junior Miss Grand Ronde Princess Amelia Mooney, middle, does a fast and fancy shawl dance during the fifth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Salem Pavilion at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem on Saturday, Jan. 26.



Tribal Elder George McEachran adds money to a shawl as girls from the Grand Ronde Canoe Family do a blanket dance to collect money during the fifth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Salem Pavilion at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem on Saturday, Jan. 26. They collected \$700 in donations and the money will go toward the family's expenses for this year's Paddle to Quinalt Canoe Journey.

Tribal Elder Debi Anderson, left, talks with attendees as they visit the Tribe's demonstration table at the fifth annual Gathering of Oregon's First Nations Powwow held at the Salem Pavilion at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem on Saturday, Jan. 26.

Photos by Michelle Alamillo