

Names added to memorial

MEMORIAL DAY
continued
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Kaleigha Simi, along with Senior Veterans Queen Savannah Ingram and Junior Veterans Queen Amelia Mooney attended.

Candidates for 2014-15 Royalty in attendance included Kallie Provost and Promise Rimer (for Senior Miss Grand Ronde), and Mabel Brisbois, Sasheene Baker, Hailey Little and Elizabeth Watson-Croy (for Junior Miss Grand Ronde). All helped serve the meal, and later, during the Memorial Day ceremony, performed "The Lord's Prayer."

Flags were at half-staff as the lunch crowd moved out to the Veterans Memorial. Special mention was made of the passing of Tribal Elder and World War II veteran Gene Hudson.

As most know, veterans represent an honored group among the Grand Ronde community.

Tribal Enrollment Specialist Jolanda Catabay along with Advanced Security Supervisor Juan Sifuentez sang the national anthem. Land and Culture Department Manager Jan Looking Wolf Reibach played taps and "Amazing Grace" on the flute, and veteran Bob

Thornton, a chiropractor in Wilamina, trumpeted taps from behind the crowd.

Wayne Chulik, carrying the Eagle staff, led veterans Al Miller, Alton Butler, Wink Soderberg and Raymond Petite in posting the colors.

Steve Bobb Sr., a former Tribal Council member, served as master of ceremonies. Bobb, a Vietnam War-era Marine Corps veteran, said, "We honor those who have served their community."

He said that Hudson, who walked on May 17, was a "brave and courageous warrior" of World War II.

He introduced the first speaker, Gunnery Sgt. Percy (Gunny) Brandon, a Marine Corps veteran and one of five Brandon sons who fought in World War II. He went on to serve in Korea and Vietnam as well.

As Tribal Council Chair Reyn Leno said, Brandon was the link between officers and enlisted soldiers.

Brandon told of moving to Grand Ronde in the 1940s and how the Grand Ronde Indians "didn't like us half-breed Siouxs!"

With four other brothers already fighting, Brandon's mother did



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Veterans Honor Guard members, from front, Tribal Elders Wink Soderberg and Alton Butler, Al Miller and Elder Raymond Petite carry in the colors at the beginning of the Tribe's annual Memorial Day ceremony at the West Valley Veterans Memorial on the Tribal campus on Monday, May 26.



Senior Veterans Queen Savannah Ingram, left, and Little Miss Grand Ronde Kaleigha Simi, along with other Royalty girls, helped serve the meal in the Tribal Community Center before the Tribe's annual Memorial Day ceremony on Monday, May 26.

not want him to enlist, but when he turned 18, he too followed his brothers to war.

He remembered refusing orders to take his 40 soldiers into battle against 300 North Vietnamese. "I could not stand to see my troops wounded or killed with those odds," he said.

He was wounded four times in battle.

"I never met a bonafide hero," said Navy veteran and former Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg, and he went over to shake Brandon's hand.

Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Services Division Administrator Eric Belt attended on behalf of Gov. John Kitzhaber and department Director Cameron Smith.

He noted "the beautiful Memorial Day for us to connect with our history and our principles earned in blood and suffering. It is an incalculable debt, and Memorial Day is a unique opportunity to say thanks, and to teach our children that nothing good comes without great cost."

Tribal Council members Denise Harvey, June Sherer, Cheryl A.

Kennedy and Leno addressed the crowd. Sherer, an Army veteran, remembered Diane Cilente. "(She was) a friend of veterans," Sherer said about the Veterans Services officer for Yamhill County who walked on in 2006. "This is a time to honor and remember those who have served."

Kennedy remembered her uncle Gene Hudson as a humble man. "When we walk this earth," she said, "we have a great job to do. ... This is the time to be mindful of and show appreciation of those who have sacrificed."

Leno, also a Vietnam-era Marine Corps veteran, said, "It is amazing to think that each one named on the memorial has stories to tell, and the only way we lose them is to forget."

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley honored "the sacrifices veterans have made. When they went to war, their families went with them. Today, we can't say thank you person to person with all, but we can to those who came back."

Merkley echoed the words of President Barack Obama, "Our hearts ache, but there is solace in knowing they gave their all for their

country."

Marine Veteran Al Miller read the names of Marines added to the memorial this year. Soderberg read the names of Navy veterans added while Sherer read the names of Army veterans added. Air Force veteran Bud White read the single name of an Air Force veteran added to the memorial.

Twelve new names were added to the memorial. New additions from the Marines: Tribal member Maxwell Hale, Ernest Keener and Richard Van Atta; from the Navy: Tribal member Gary Leuthauser, David and Isaac Risseuw, and Len Malmquist; from the Army: Tribal members Kerrina Grout Frenney and Nathaniel Lane, Lee Roy Smith and Randy Hoff; and from the Air Force: Jack Stevens. The additions bring the number of names on the memorial's four black granite pillars to 2,283.

Bud Abbott read the poem, "Remember Me, America."

Tribal Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor and Administrative Assistant Chelsea Clark helped coordinate the event with the Grand Ronde Veterans Special Event Board. ■