

Tribe to manage almost 5,000 acres

ENCAMPMENT continued
from front page

1853 treaty signing at Table Rocks, as well as the Tribe's 2011 memorandum of understanding with the Bureau of Land Management and the Nature Conservancy.

The memorandum gave the Grand Ronde Tribe the right to manage almost 5,000 acres of pristine land around Table Rocks where the 1856 Trail of Tears started. The area is within the Tribe's ceded lands.

Each year since 2012, Tribal members have set up demonstrations of Grand Ronde culture and hands-on experiences with Indian ways at the state park.

Joining Farber were students Daniel D'Mello and Malachi Beal, and their mothers. They made beaded necklaces and asked questions of Tribal cultural consultant Greg Archuleta, who put together the educational display, including carving and weaving and the materials used to make cultural artifacts.

More than 18 years as a teacher, Farber said of his students, "I always made sure they knew that first peoples were here long before Europeans arrived."

Farber said that part of his lessons included information about the nine Oregon Tribes.

Medford City Councilor Bob Strosser attended with his grandson, seventh-grader Joey Zach. Asked what he knew about Tribal culture in Oregon, Zach said, "Indians were here before Europeans came and they ate a lot of fish."

Strosser called the Tribe's outreach in the area "impressive."

"The encampment," he said, "made you feel like you had new friends." He added that there is potential to bring Tribal education to the area's Rotary Clubs.

Chris Arthur of Portland, a retiree who volunteers with the Native American Youth and Family Center on its Urban Canoe project, was in the area for a national conference. "I thought I would drop by," she said.

The daylong encampment was held mostly in the shade of a 100-degree day on Saturday, Sept. 20. The day before, friends of the Tribal MOU were invited to "Coffee and Conversation" at the Marriott Courtyard in Medford.

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno welcomed the group in a cooled conference room. He said how good it is to be connected to the land. "This has been our home for thousands of years," he said.

Leno discussed the Tribe's fourth-grade curriculum and the



Photo by Ron Karten

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno welcomes a group of Medford-area officials for "Coffee and Conversation" at the Marriott Courtyard on Friday, Sept. 19.

eighth-grade curriculum being developed.

A tribal group from Tribal Council, Land and Culture, Legal and Public Affairs described important points about the Tribe to a group of more than 30 who filled the conference room.

Tribal Historian David Lewis talked about the recently opened Chachalu Museum and Cultural Center, the Chinuk Wawa language program, Native skills and crafts, and gave a brief history of the Tribe.

"We're restoring the functions of government and re-establishing our relationship with our lands," Lewis said. "We've been here before written history. We've been able to trace it back 14,500 years, and we'll be here forever."

Tribal Attorney Rob Greene talked about the MOU's framework "to work together and bring the Tribal culture to others. It is such a beautiful place," he said. "I love coming down here and walking through the area."

Tribal friends Taylor and Emily Grimes teach the story of the Table Rocks region through their speedboat recreation business, Rogue Jet Boat Adventures. The Grimes have consulted with the Tribe to have accurate information about the Grand Ronde experience in the area. This year, the Grand Ronde story went out on 3,500 trips up and down the Rogue River.

"It's really great that we can work together," Taylor said. "It's our passion for the region that keeps us excited about the education. It's a tremendous opportunity for the Tribe to be involved in the area."

"We're moving on the projects we are working on," said Jean Williams of the Butte Falls office of the Bureau of Land Management.

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"We have had great partners in our projects."

"We're so grateful for the relationship with the Tribe," said Molly Monson of The Nature Conservancy. The Medford branch of The Nature Conservancy has mapped communities at Table Rocks and documented the fauna and flora in the area. She said that in addition to thinning and burning activities, "There is a strong educational component in their work."

Marko Bey, executive director of the Lomakatsi Restoration Project, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, is "building momentum for working in the area, creating workforce development to bring some of the ideas for the area to life. The project is a nonprofit, grass-

roots organization that develops and implements forest and watershed restoration projects in Oregon and northern California."

"With these partners," said Tribal Council Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr., "we can get to the next level. Everybody is studying eels. Last year, we caught 120 eels due to these partnerships."

Jill Nishball, of Oregon State Parks, has been "sparked" by the new Grand Ronde curriculum because of her work with children.

"It took us 30 years to prove that we can take care of us," said Leno. "With the relationships we have here, I think we can do it."

Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor said that the Tribe wants to know, "What can we do for you?"

Involved in the Friday meeting were representatives of the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, Oregon State Parks, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Jackson County Board of Commissioners, Medford City Council, The Nature Conservancy and the Lomakatsi Restoration Project.

From the Tribe, in addition to Leno and Giffen, were Tribal Council members Cheryl A. Kennedy, Jon A. George and Ed Pearsall. Staff members in attendance were Taylor and Public Affairs Administrative Assistant Chelsea Clark, who put the weekend events together.

Greene and Lewis, as well as other Tribal members, Portland Tribal Services Representative Lisa Archuleta and Leno's granddaughter, Cheyanne Fasana, also participated.

"This is a very, very special place," said Taylor. ■

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Help wanted

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's 477 Employment and Training Program and Land and Culture Department have resources that can be utilized along with community members who have a passion for gardening or want to learn the art of agriculture. If you are a Grand Ronde Tribal or community member and want to be a part of the planning, preparation and cultivation of the Tribal garden and orchard site for next year's planting season, contact Barbara Gibbons at 800-242-8196, ext. 2135, or e-mail barbara.gibbons@grandronde.org. ■

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