

Walking On...

Mark Brian Steere

March 2, 1956 – Sept. 9, 2014

Tribal spouse Mark Brian Steere, 58, of Willamina passed away peacefully on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2014, at home with his family and beloved dog, Bucky.



Although Mark managed to battle and beat cancer at a very young age, the effects of his treatment created lifelong health issues. Mark was a geologist, mechanic, logger, husband, father, brother, cousin, uncle and friend. He will be missed by many.

Mark was born in Crescent City, Calif., on March 2, 1956, to George and Charlotte Steere. His family moved to Oregon and he grew up with his brothers and cousins on the Siletz River in Lincoln City. Mark graduated from Taft High School in 1974 and was a proud Oregon State University alumnus.

He married his wife, Barbara (Leno), on Sept. 27, 1987. They enjoyed nearly 27 years together. Their son, Douglas, arrived in February 1996. Their niece, Aubrey, spent many summers and vacations with Mark, Barbara and Douglas. Mark enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, taking long drives, water and snow skiing, and Seattle Seahawks football. He was a lifelong learner, with a book or newspaper always in hand. Most of all, Mark enjoyed spending time with his family.

Mark is survived by his wife, Barbara; son, Douglas; parents, George and Charlotte Steere; brothers, Mike (Ela) Steere of Lincoln City and Jeff (Debbie) Steere of Beaverton; as well as aunts, uncles, cousins, and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his brother, Doug Steere.

Barbara and Douglas send their thanks and appreciation to all for the love and support they have received from family and friends. At Mark's request, no services were held. A potluck in Mark's honor was held Sunday, Sept. 21, at the Thomas family property in Grand Ronde.

Dallas Mortuary Tribute Center cared for the family. To leave a message or memory for the family, go to www.dallastrIBUTE.com.

Blanket farewell



Photo by Dean Rhodes

Early Childhood Education employee Sandra Bobb received a Tribal Pendleton blanket on Friday, Sept. 12, from Early Childhood Education Program Manager Vikki Bishop during a farewell gathering for her. Bobb started working for the Tribal Education Department in 2002 and resigned to take a position with SAM Medical Products in Wilsonville, which the Tribe has invested in. Her last day with the Tribe was Sept. 12. "I have had the honor of working with a team of professionals who are selflessly committed every day to making a positive impact on the lives of the children and families in the Grand Ronde community," Bobb said. "They have enriched my life in the process."

'SB 412 is a living, breathing document'

CONFERENCE continued from front page

ments, attorneys and others came together on Thursday, Sept. 18, at Spirit Mountain Casino to discuss "principles of successful multi-jurisdictional law enforcement in and out of Indian Country."

Most states have not passed a similar law and Oregon's law sunsets in 2015. This group of police and others involved with police work, however, agreed that the law has worked well.

Grand Ronde Police Chief Al LaChance said that SB 412 has been good for the police in Grand Ronde and networking has enabled the Tribal police, working with others, to improve law enforcement in the area. Going forward, he said, the Tribal police force will strengthen existing bonds and reach out to create new ones.

Polk County Sheriff Robert Wolfe, who initially opposed the law, said that good results changed his mind.

"We're better with it than against it," he said. Polk County Sheriff's Department has worked successfully with the Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department, he said.

"Before 412," said Brad Kneaper, former chief of police at the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Tribe, "individual relationships may not have been the best. After 412, we had a lot more comfortable relationships with other sheriffs."

State Sen. Floyd Prozanski, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, guided the bill through the Senate in 2011. In his lunch-time update, he said, "I haven't heard anything from anybody that this law is not a success." He said he intended to make it permanent during the 2015 legislative session.

"Improved communication and partnership are the lynchpin," said Eriks Gabliks, director of the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, the state police academy.

"It's milestone legislation," Gabliks added. "National voices think SB 412 is a significant advance."

"Local Tribal jurisdiction works best," said Tom Gede, a member of the Federal Indian Law and Order Commission, providing a national context. "It's strengthening Tribal justice."

Gede noted that in Arizona, certified Tribal police are eligible for the state's public safety retirement

plan. "It's a great tool for retention," he said.

Also based in Arizona, but with membership across many states, is the Indian Country Intelligence Network created to organize and share law enforcement information, expertise and training.

"Benign neglect," Gede said, is holding much back with regard to improvements for Native justice.

Still, he said, "Oregon is doing a great job, way ahead of the other states."

"Our relationships with seven counties," said Mitch Hicks, chief of enforcement for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, "sped up our MOUs to getting them in a few weeks."

The biggest challenge in establishing formal relations between Tribes and other law enforcement agencies, said Tim Addleman, police chief for the Umatilla Tribal Police Department, is that Tribes have balked at loss of sovereignty.

It is also a challenge to give out Tribal member information, said Carman Smith, police chief of the Burns Paiute Tribe.

"We can't have bickering for a seamless police response," said Shepherd. Even if one person has

made an important mistake, "the public verdict comes down on the whole system."

"There is definitely value in coming together to share information and continue to build relationships that help all of us to work better together across jurisdictions," said Justin Martin, Grand Ronde Tribal lobbyist. "This, in turn, creates safer communities and a safer state for all Oregonians."

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno welcomed the group to Grand Ronde in a conference room at the casino and added, "It has always been a dream of the Tribe to have our own police force. Now we do."

Leno said that the Tribe honors veterans for their service to the country, and that many went on to serve in the police, too.

Also in attendance from the Tribe were Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary, Planning Director Rick George and Mindy Lane, who handles records and evidence for the Tribe's police.

"Changing a culture takes time," said Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan.

"SB 412 is a living, breathing document," said Shepherd. ■