

Emcee stand, sound booth to be added

**POWWOW continued
from page 10**

we, as a Tribe, are truly blessed to have what we have. It's an honor to be part of that."

Polk County Commissioner Jennifer Wheeler also was honored by Tribal Council for her ongoing positive relationship with the Tribal leadership.

"I'm just so happy to be here," said Wheeler. "Oh my gosh, the arbor is just beautiful. Somebody really knew what they were doing to engineer this. It's more open and it's more natural, and it's just beautiful."

Tribal member Jon R. George, who works at Spirit Mountain Casino as the Keno/Bingo/Playworld manager, was seeing the arbor for the first time.

"I'm taking in my culture," said George. "This is great."

Gleason-Shepek said she was deeply affected from being part of the inaugural grand entry under the new arbor.

"It's overwhelmingly emotional," said Gleason-Shepek. "This is permanent. It means we are going to be here forever. I'm very proud and very humbled to be a part of it. It's incredible."

Tribal member Bobby Mercier said the new arbor is modeled after a similar one in Kamloops, British Columbia.

"I had taken a lot of pictures and council said, 'We want a log structure' and I had pictures of it on my phone," said Mercier. "I showed them the pictures and they said, 'That's exactly what we want.' I've been trying to get us to have an arbor for 12, 14 years now. So this being here is kind of a dream."

Native veteran Lindsey Watchman of Pendleton said that he had visited Grand Ronde a few times for the Veterans Summit and Veterans Powwow and that this year he was part of a group of six veterans who made the trip from the northeast-

ern part of Oregon.

"This is beautiful," said Watchman, who works as an educator at the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center in Pendleton. "As soon as I made that turn and saw the arbor, I thought this is amazing. This was a truly moving and spiritual experience."

Mercier said in the future there will be a built-in emcee stand and a sound booth for the public address equipment. He said there will be permanent bleachers constructed that will create more seating capacity.

"There is still a lot more work to be done here," said Mercier.

Mercier said the new arbor also will be cost efficient and save the Tribe almost \$20,000 annually by not having to rent a big tent twice a year.

"The tent was always temporary," said Mercier. "We really wanted to build something like this so we wouldn't have to worry about that tent anymore. So now we have a permanent structure. No more renting anything. I think it shows we are doing something for our people and for our guests so they can be comfortable."

Tribal member Marcus Gibbons, who was part of the construction crew that built the arbor, echoed the feelings of many when he said on Sunday, July 12, "It's beautiful to come here and see this."

Color Guard logo

One of the most striking features of the new arbor, according to many visitors, is the carved, wooden Color Guard logo hanging from the arbor.

The circular carving features American wood and also more unusual and exotic woods to create the logo's color. In fact, the only paint used on the wooden logo is the black background paint.

"I'm very proud to have been asked to do this," said carver David Ho. "Steve Bobb came to me and



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Kaleigha Simi, left, and her mother, Shannon, dance a jingle dance as they compete in the Mother/Daughter special during the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Saturday, July 11. The pair won first place and their prizes were Tribal logo Pendleton blankets.

said, 'Are you capable?' and I said I was. I was born and raised with wood carving."

Ho, who is of Vietnamese descent, has been working for the Tribe by request for many years and has made much of the furniture and desks used by Tribal employees in the Governance Center and other Tribal buildings.

Ho said he used all natural woods in the design — American

red oak, American black walnut, rosewood and redwood and that he imported more exotic wood like Jackfruit to create the colors of the hand-carved logo.

Jackfruit, also known as Jack tree, is native only to parts of south and southeast Asia and originated in the southwestern rainforests of India. The fruit that grows in the Jack trees is the national fruit of Bangladesh. ■



Levi Liebelt puts his son Nacoma's bustle on him as he prepares to dance at the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Saturday, July 11.



Newly crowned Veterans Junior Queen Amaryssa Mooney, left, and Veterans Senior Queen Goldie Bly take their first dance after being crowned during the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Friday, July 10.