

'This is what we do'

POWWOW continued
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ing. He was the rock for our family. I loved him. I think my grandpa is smiling down on us."

As many as 25 members of Lafferty's family participated in the traditional giveaway with the youngest members handling the passing out of gifts.

Bad Soul got things started again for the contest at about 2:30 p.m. Host drum Bad Soul consists of Leland Butler, Washie Squitimkin, Carlos McNair, Dustin Harmon, Robin Uses Arrow, Bo Johnson, Sunny Doeny, James Smith, Jeremy Russell and William and San Poil Whitehead, who represent many Tribes.

A total of 237 dancers registered for the Contest Powwow this year and an estimated 300 dancers filled the arena during Saturday's interTribal dances. Dancers in 21 categories, including the winner-takes-all mother/daughter special, competed for approximately \$35,000 in prize money.

Five Grand Ronde Tribal members placed in the dance categories, including two dancers in the Junior Girls Jingle dance category. Kaleigha Simi finished fourth and Aleena Westley finished in fifth place.

Tribal youth Nacoma Liebelt finished fourth in the Junior Boys Traditional category, Marcel Allen finished third in the Teen Boys Grass dance competition and Leah Villa finished third in the Womens Traditional dance category.

"I think it definitely answered the question of the arena being big enough," said Leno. "We could have done a couple more circles at grand entry."

Leno said the Contest Powwow ran out of parking and that the visually striking new arbor added to this year's attraction. Powwow T-shirts sold out by 2 p.m. Saturday.

"It showed how serious we take our gatherings," said Leno. "Overall, it was great to see that many people come together and work together. It really showed people we are here for the right reasons. I think our ancestors who passed away would be looking down on this as a great representation.

"It (the arbor) represents the strength of the Tribe. Now we have built something that will probably be here forever. My dad would have said, 'This is what we do.'"

This year's drum competition featured \$20,000 in prize money, including \$8,000 for first place, \$5,000 for second place and \$3,000 for third place. Blackstone won the competition, Iron Horse finished second and Wild Rose finished third.

Many powwow attendees had first-time experiences that they said they would remember forever.

Tribal member Rhonda Leno, Social Services Department secretary, said this year's powwow was her favorite. She said it was the first time her granddaughter, Grace Ness, danced on the powwow grounds in



Photos by Michelle Alaimo



Above, Memory Leno jingle dances in an InterTribal dance during the 2015 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Contest Powwow on Saturday, Aug. 15. On the left dancing is Laila Holmes.

Halona Butler dances in Grand Entry of the 2015 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Contest Powwow on Friday, Aug. 14.

Ryan's brothers, Phillip and Victor and Victor's wife Ann-Marie experienced the Tribal event for the first time and they all loved it.

Phillip lives with his mother and father in Gloucester, England, and Victor and Ann-Marie currently live in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

"It's nice to see the culture, especially being from England you're not exposed to the Tribal experience," said Ann-Marie. "It's nice to be a part of it and it's nice to get a really warm welcome."

Ryan's mother, Diane, was impressed with the young dancers she saw in the arena.

"I think it's nice to see the tradition kept alive, isn't it? The regalia is amazing. It is good to see the next generation. They were really good dancers, I mean really good."

Ann-Marie said she liked Grand Ronde Tribal Elder Claudia Leno's Indian tacos.

"Brilliant," she said with a big smile. ■

Editor's note: Ashlee Webb is reporter Brent Merrill's daughter.

regalia that she had made for her.

"She was really enjoying the dancing," said Rhonda. "I have to say this was one of my favorite powwows. I think my granddaughter had a lot to do with that. She's just starting out. She's just 20 months old. There was a real sense of joy. It was great. I hope next year's powwow brings the same sort of energy. Powwow is family and that is what it means to me."

New to the area and attending their first powwow were Rob Shader and his wife, Maggie. Shader is the new varsity head football coach at Willamina High School, where he will teach world history, and Maggie is the new cheerleader coach at Willamina Middle School, where she will teach social studies.

"My wife and I had a great time experiencing a different culture," said Shader. "We both teach history and culture is a big part of our curriculum. Having 33 percent Native students in our classrooms, it was fun to experience what they have grown up with."

Spirit Mountain Casino security guard Roel Hernandez brought his mother, Virginia Hernandez, from Lubbock, Texas, for this year's event and she soaked it all in from the bleachers.

"It's beautiful," said Virginia. "I haven't seen anything like this before."

Ashlee Webb had her husband Ryan's family visiting from England to experience the powwow.