

30 Grand Ronde dancers participated in powwow

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reaching the mid-80s.

Powwow Special Event Board Chair Dana Ainam said there were 171 dancers registered to compete this year, down from the usually more than 200 who attend. Of those dancers, 30 were Grand Ronde Tribal members and 10 Tribal members were winners this year.

Tribal Elder Wink Soderberg said it seemed like there were more vendors than ever before.

"There is a real assortment of stuff. It's really good," said Soderberg. "That's probably the best I've seen it."

Tribal General Manager Dave Fullerton said that Tribal administration and the Powwow Special Event Board started making preparations for the heat in advance of the powwow.

"We had two 20-by-20-foot cooling stations set up on the grounds," said Fullerton. "They had air conditioning pumped into them so people could go in there and relax. The other thing we did was we got 2,600 bottles of water from the casino."

Fullerton said he directed crews to set up the water bottles in shaded stations throughout the powwow grounds and he said they were ready to open up the Elders Activity Center as a cooling station if it had been necessary.

"Overall, I think it was great," said Fullerton of the powwow weekend. "The temperature cooperated by Saturday evening."

Fullerton commended the Powwow Special Event Board for putting on another great show and pointed to the Education Committee's "School Is Cool" dance special on Friday night and the fancy dance special held on Saturday night as reasons to praise their efforts.

Participants in the Education Committee dance special were awarded school supplies by committee members.

"We do a good job of getting school supplies to our kids in this community, but the Education Committee



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Marcel Allen competes in the Teen Boys Grass dance category during the 2016 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Contest Powwow held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Saturday, Aug. 20. He took fifth place in the category.

does that to benefit all the kids who show up there," said Fullerton. "Everyone walks away with something. With powwow being right before school starts, I think that's great."

Chris Mercier said he was happy to be one of the judges for the

"School Is Cool" dance special this year.

"It's cool because you can see that some of these kids are on a path that they are going to start doing that (dancing at powwows) on a regular basis," said Chris Mercier.

"You can tell that they put a lot of heart and soul into their regalia and everything. It's just great to see that at such a young age and to see them embrace their Tribal heritage."

Fullerton said he was happy with the way the Powwow Special Event Board used extra prize money they had from the drum prize pool to put on a Saturday night Men's and Women's Fancy Dance Special. The crowd showed its appreciation when the men's and women's winners then met on the arena dance floor for a dance-off showdown.

"They (the Powwow SEB) found a way to do some other things to show

appreciation to all the drummers and dancers for coming to this community," said Fullerton. "I think it will become a mainstay so that was great."

Fire Protection Technician Logan Kneeland said the Tribal community and Reservation lands were at a level three fire threat from Wednesday, Aug. 17, through Monday, Aug. 22, and then transitioned back to a level two as cooler weather took hold.

He said the Tribe's Natural Resources Department had two engines on patrol Friday and Saturday and that there were no incidents during the powwow.

Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight said his department had a slow powwow weekend and that is just how he likes it.

McKnight, who has been coming to the Tribal powwows since they were held in the field behind the grade school when he was a boy, said he is sometimes in awe of everything that has come about in the

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Amelia Mooney dances in an InterTribal dance during the 2016 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Contest Powwow held at Uyxat Powwow Grounds on Friday, Aug. 19.