

'It's a special honor to be involved



Tribal Elder Marcella Selwyn donates money as the Veterans and Grand Ronde Royalty do a blanket dance during the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow on Saturday, July 8. The \$102 that was collected will go toward powwow expenses.

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torpedoes. He survived, but 429 of his fellow shipmates were killed or missing in action.

Russell's presence was a highlight of the Saturday afternoon session of the powwow, which saw 64 veterans line up and state their branch of service and years enlisted. Many veterans also took time to honor relatives or lost comrades who also served in the military.

"It's a special honor to be involved here with a World War II veteran," Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno said during his Saturday afternoon welcoming speech. "We really have to treat these people special. I was just over in Hawaii and I met a World War II veteran, Vietnam veteran and Korean veteran. He is 96 years old and he fought in all three wars. These people are really special. It's an honor to be on the same powwow grounds with this man (Russell), so give him a

big hand."

Russell survived the Pearl Harbor attack by scrambling via rope to the nearby USS Missouri, staying out of the raging oil- and gas-fueled fires in the water. He is one of only 29 Oklahoma shipmates still alive today.

Sixteen days after Pearl Harbor, he was reassigned to serve on the destroyer USS Mahan as a gunner's mate. Three years later to the day on Dec. 7, 1944, he survived unharmed a kamikaze attack on the Mahan that so severely damaged the ship that another Navy destroyer had to sink it.

Russell eventually retired in 1960 after serving more than 20 years in the Navy.

Veterans Royalty named

The Veterans Powwow officially started at 6 p.m. Friday, July 7, with the naming of 2017-18 Veterans Royalty. Hailey Lewis-Little was named Senior Veterans Queen and Tasina Bluehorse was named Junior Veterans Queen. They competed in a Veterans Royalty Pageant held on Thursday, July 6, at the Governance Center Atrium.

Outgoing Veterans Royalty Queens Makenzie and Madison Aaron held a giveaway that included honoring their family members

Veterans Junior Princess Camas Gibbons dances during the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow on Friday, July 7.



Tribal Elder and Navy veteran Wink Soderberg, Chairman Steve Bobb Sr., on behalf of the board of the Inn at Spanish Head in Lincoln City during the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow on Saturday, July 8.

for supporting their year of service as Veterans Royalty.

Friday evening's grand entry at 7 p.m. set the protocol that the rest of the Veterans Powwow would follow. Veterans lined up behind the Grand Ronde Honor Guard, which led the procession into the Powwow Grounds arbor to the pulsating beats delivered by host drum Bad Soul from Grand Ronde.

As Public Affairs Administrative Assistant Chelsea Clark smudged the powwow arena, the Honor Guard of Grand Ronde Elder Alton Butler and Wayne Chulik (Tlingit) holding eagle staffs began leading veterans into the arbor. Veterans Special Event Board Chairman Steve Bobb Sr. carried the U.S. flag, Al Miller carried the Oregon flag, Daniel Helfrich carried the MIA/POW flag and Tribal Elder Raymond Petite carried the Grand Ronde flag.

Approximately 30 veterans followed as did Leno, Polk County Commissioner Jennifer Wheeler, Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George and fellow Tribal Council members Denise Harvey, Brenda Tuomi, Tonya Gleason-Shepek, Jack Giffen Jr. and Chris Mercier.

A second honor guard, Veterans Color Guard from Jefferson, Ore., also participated in the grand entry dressed in red, white and blue ribbon shirts. Members included Air Force veteran Bill Stam (Lakota), Navy veteran Wes Weathers (Cherokee), Air Force veteran Tobie Davie (Cherokee), Judy Suitor (Apache), Army veteran Wayne Dow, Navy veteran Shane Cardwell (Lakota), and Air Force veterans Mike Forest (Cherokee) and Cat Sanderson (Rosebud Lakota).

Arena director Carlos Calica (Warm Springs) choreographed the entrance, keeping the line orderly as master of ceremonies Nick Sixkiller (Oklahoma Cherokee), a Navy veteran, asked audience members to honor "the protectors of this great country" as they entered the arena. Tony Whitehead (Uma-