

'We've come a long way'

MEETING continued
from front page

the Tribal chairs from seven of the other eight federally recognized Tribes in Oregon.

"The Tribes and the state share an interest in determining the provenance, the appropriate custodian, and the appropriate storage or display of such items," the executive order states. "Oregon's Tribes deserve an established process to determine best practices for gathering information about these types of cultural items associated with Oregon Tribes, and for determining the most appropriate 'next steps' for establishing workable strategies and plans for discussion regarding these cultural items and/or return of the items to associated Oregon Tribes."

The Task Force will include the governor's legal counsel, members of the governor's staff, representatives from the State Historic Preservation Office and Legislative Commission on Indian Services, and one member each from Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes, among others.

The executive order signing punctuated a day of Tribal representatives interacting with a slew of state department heads and their staff members, and representatives from the Governor's Office.

When asked to stand by Misha Isaak, Brown's general counsel, approximately 15 state department heads, more than 30 state employees and seven Governor's Office staff members stood. In addition, Brown remained at the summit all day, a significant time investment for the state's top elected official.

The annual interaction between state and Tribal leaders started on Wednesday, Nov. 1, with a Legislative Commission on Indian Services' "Fall Gathering and Learning Session" also held at Chinook Winds.

During the daylong learning session, attendees heard mostly about federal, state and Tribal law. University of Colorado School of Law Professor Charles Wilkinson talked about the fundamentals of federal Indian law and Daniel Santos, a former legal counsel to four Oregon governors and an associate dean at Willamette University's School of Law, discussed state law and policy.

Warm Springs Vice Chair Jody Calica spoke about Tribal, cus-



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum talks about her office's interactions with Oregon Tribes during the 18th annual State-Tribal Summit held at Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City on Thursday, Nov. 2.

tomary and unwritten law and Legislative Commission on Indian Services Director Karen Quigley and commission members talked about what makes an effective key contact in State-Tribal Relations.

In the afternoon, Kennedy and Cultural Resources Department Manager David Harrelson were members of a panel that discussed Tribal ceremonies and the significance of culture.

The official summit started at 9 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 2. Grand Ronde Elder and former Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. carried in the Grand Ronde Tribal flag during the opening ceremony.

Siletz Tribal Council Chairwoman Dee Pigsley welcomed attendees and discussed how far the Siletz Tribe has come from having \$75 in a coffee can before its 1977 Restoration until now as it approaches its 40th anniversary of Restoration.

"We've come a long way," Pigsley said. "Casino money is big money, but it serves a lot of purposes."

Pigsley and Siletz Vice Chair Bud Lane gifted a 40th anniversary Pendleton blanket to Brown before eight Tribal chairs took the stage with the governor to deliver opening remarks.

Brown said during her 10-minute opening remarks that the lesson she has learned since 2001's passage of Senate Bill 700, which mandates the government-to-government relationship between the state and its Tribes, is that change takes a long time to accomplish.

She cited the effort to remove the "S" word – squaw – from Oregon geographical names as an example.

"Change doesn't happen from the top down, but it happens from the bottom up," Brown said. "I think, for me, it's really important that we continue to move forward. That we work from the bottom up and not from the top down."

Brown said that as she moves forward in the last year of her current term and hopefully during a new four-year term as governor that she wants to concentrate on jobs, education and health care as her priorities.

Specifically, she said she wants to grow economies in rural Oregon by working with Tribes, improve the high school graduation rates and decrease the absenteeism rates for Native American students, and improve health care for all Oregonians, including Tribal members.

"I know that health care is fundamental," Brown said. "I've seen it on the ground. It is absolutely key to all Oregonians achieving their full potential and ensuring that Oregon is a state where everyone can thrive."

Kennedy, who sat next to Brown, concentrated on health care, reflecting her many years of working in Indian health care. She said that Tribes pre-paid for their government-funded health care by exchanging large swathes of land for promises that included health care.

However, Native Americans continue to receive the lowest amount per capita in health care funding in the United States, even less than those who are incarcerated.

"So down through the generations, I felt like health care is something that should be at the top of the pinnacle," Kennedy said. "But when you look at the figures for the health care dollars that are spent on Native peoples, we are at the bottom."

Kennedy also talked about Native Americans suffering from historical post-traumatic stress disorder, veterans' homelessness and how

shameful it is for warriors to be without a place to live, and how important it is for people to be employed, which can cure many problems like low self-esteem and dysfunctional behaviors.

"The past is the past. We've lived through it and we've come this far and I'm now sitting next to the governor," Kennedy said. "Who would have thought that even 50 years ago? Great things have happened and as we move forward, I know that we're going to get better and better."

After Employment Relations Board Conciliator Janet Gillman discussed interest-based negotiations, a video posted on the State Parks website titled "Helping

Them Home" covered how important it is for people to leave unearthed Tribal artifacts where they are found. The video featured Grand Ronde Tribal members and former Cultural Resources Department employees David Lewis and Don Day.

During the "Educating Oregonians About Tribes & the Significance of Their Resources" panel discussion, Oregon Department of Transportation Director Matt Garrett cited the example of the Grand Ronde Tribe's \$4 million donation to the Dundee-Newberg Bypass road construction project as an example of how the state and Tribes can harness their resources to reach a common goal.

State Sens. Ted Ferrioli, R-John Day, and Arnie Roblan, D-Coos Bay, discussed two pieces of legislation that affect Tribes. Ferrioli talked about Senate Bill 144, which gives the state authority to prosecute cases of archaeological looting if local district attorneys decline to do so, and Roblan talked about Senate Bill 13, which mandates that Oregon Tribal histories be taught in public schools.

After lunch, Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum gave a brief speech about her office's interactions with Tribes.

Rosenblum said her office interacts with Oregon Tribes regarding law enforcement and through gaming compacts and other memoranda of understanding.

"One lesson we have all learned from the past is that litigation between the state and Indian Tribes is not the best way to reach long-lasting solutions," Rosenblum said. "Instead, it is often better to work together to find common ground and identify mutual interests. ... I am committed to standing together with you as we face the challenges that come our way."

Other afternoon panel discussions addressed the needs of Tribal and rural communities and the art of ceremony.

In addition to Kennedy and Harrelson, Tribal Council members Denise Harvey and Michael Langley attended the summit. ■

WIC visits monthly

Pregnant? Breastfeeding? Does your family include a child under the age of 5?

If so, you may qualify for the Women, Infants and Children program. With WIC, people can receive answers to nutritional questions and access fruits and vegetables, whole grains, eggs, milk, cheese, juice, cereal and more.

A WIC representative visits the Tribal Community Center on the third Tuesday of the month, which will be Nov. 21.

Walk-ins are welcome between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 503-879-2034. ■