

# 'It's always nice to see people you don't normally see'

## GOVERNMENT DAY continued from front page

Denise Harvey, Michael Langley, Lisa Leno and Brenda Tuomi. Secretary Jon A. George was on vacation.

"It is inherent upon us to make efforts to inform people of our Native presence and history," Mercier said. "We have our own governments, traditions and culture to share. We have a role to play in this education and it is through opportunities like Tribal Governments Day."

Mercier said that several Tribes took the opportunity to feature cultural displays at the event.

"There are a lot of new faces here and it is nice how they put their culture on full display," he said. "It is fun to see what everyone has. But I think Warm Springs might win because they are giving away salmon."

Kennedy, the longest-serving member of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services, served as event host along with fellow commission members and staff.

"Serving on the commission has been a pleasure and it affords the opportunity for our nine Tribes to speak in a united way," Kennedy said. "We deal with issues that impact all of the Tribes in Oregon."

Also in attendance from Grand Ronde were General Manager David Fullerton, Tribal Attorney Rob Greene, Administrative Assistant

Meghan Zimbrick, Spirit Mountain Community Fund Executive Director Mychal Cherry, Community Fund Program Coordinator Angie Sears, Youth Council Coordinator Shannon Simi and Youth Council members Aspen Wilson, Dominik Briant, Isabelle Grout, Raven Harmon and Madalyn Volz. Junior Miss Grand Ronde Kaleigha Simi also attended the event.

Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez and Public Affairs Administrative Assistant Chelsea Clark worked at the Tribe's informational table, greeting event attendees and answering questions. Giveaways included Grand Ronde-themed 2018 calendars, chocolates, mints, water bottles, pencils, phone cleaners, copies of *Smoke Signals* and informational pamphlets. They were assisted by Harvey's 4-year-old granddaughter, Hallie Brewer.

"It's always nice to see people you don't normally see," Harvey said. "It's an opportunity to reconnect and have casual conversations in a low-key setting. It's also nice to have our Youth Council here."

It was Leno's first time at the event as a Tribal Council member.

"It has been an honor to attend today and meet representatives from other Tribes," she said.

The Tribe also provided a light breakfast of pastries, fruit, coffee and bagels. Other Tribes provide donations of coffee and water. The Native American Rehabilitation

Association was unable to serve its mini fry bread at noon due to the inclement weather farther north in the Portland area.

In years past, Gov. Kate Brown and her predecessors would often stop by, but Brown was unable to make it this year.

Tribal Governments Day has been held for more than 12 years and provides an opportunity for Oregon's Tribes to highlight who they are and what makes Tribal governments different from the various special interest groups and stakeholders with whom legislators and state agencies mostly interact.

"Tribes and attendees all seemed pleased with the event," Legislative Commission on Indian Services Executive Director Karen Quigley said. "Each Tribe's table was distinct and thoughtful in its display — a great way to reinforce the message that all Tribes are individual sovereigns."

Quigley said she observed school groups, Capitol staff, agency directors and staff, legislators and staff, lobbyists and members of the public at the event.

"Grand Ronde had a wonderful display and plenty of council and staff willing to talk and share throughout the day," she said. "As always, we are grateful for Grand Ronde's generous contribution. Visitors and Tribal reps alike enjoyed the breakfast treats."

Simi said that it was the third time most Youth Council members

have attended Tribal Governments Day.

"This is exposing them to life outside of what they usually experience in the Tribe," she said. "Bringing the youth here, letting them experience the day and mingling with others is important. It would be great if we could have more kids in the community attend this event."

Simi and Zimbrick also took Youth Council members on a guided tour of the Capitol afterward.

It was Grout's second time at Tribal Governments Day.

"I really enjoyed meeting the governor last time," she said. "It's fun to be able to see all of the Tribes and displays."

Briant said he enjoys seeing the displays and the opportunity to tour the Capitol.

"It is a great experience because you get to learn more," he said.

In addition to giving away salmon, the Warm Springs Tribe included a display about the 1855 Treaty with the Tribes of mid-Oregon. Umatilla featured information on first foods, Burns Paiute had a Tribal history display, Klamath had information on programs and departments, Siletz had information on available outreach and support services, Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw featured traditional foods, the Coquille Tribe focused on culture, and Cow Creek featured information on its coffee company and cultural items. ■

**Vocational Rehabilitation Culture Day**

**Come and make a drum or medicine bag**

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