

es who built Falls fishing platform



General Manager David Fullerton, left, talks to the Tribal members and staff gathered in the Tribal gym to celebrate the completion of the ceremonial fishing platform at Willamette Falls on Wednesday, Nov. 7 as Cultural Resources Manager David Harrelson, right, prepares a presentation.

that a fishing platform had been constructed and the Tribe had overcome numerous obstacles, from getting fishing and hunting rights restored by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife to Portland General Electric revoking permission to access the fishing platform site.

“What a joy it is to see you all here today,” Kennedy said. “My heart feels very glad, proud, thankful and blessed that we have a group of individuals who share our vision, who believe in what we’re doing and will put themselves at risk in order to fulfill the goals of this Tribe.

“So I stand here today, very humble to be a part of all of this ... to know that the blood that flows through my veins is attached to Willamette Falls, as many of you as well.”

Kennedy also reminded employees about how the Tribe had to sacrifice its hunting and fishing rights in the 1980s to secure state support for its Reservation Plan.

“We were held hostage by the state,” Kennedy said.

Fullerton recognized a slew of employees who helped, including Tribal Attorney Rob Greene, Se-

nior Staff Attorney Jennifer Biesack, Procurement Manager Larry Leith, Procurement Supervisor Kevin Mueller, Lead Shipping & Receiving Clerk Nathan Rolston,

Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez, Executive Assistant Barbara Branson, Deputy Press Secretary Sara Thompson, Realty Coordinator Teresa Brocksen, Cultural Advisor Bobby Mercier, Maintenance Supervisor Andrew Freeman, Career Development Case Worker David DeHart, Nutrition Program Manager Kristy Criss-Lawson and Lead Cook Kevin Campbell, as well as Tribal Council members and Youth Education, Silviculture and Cultural Resources employees.

Fullerton and Tribal Council

Tribal Council member Kathleen George, left, presents a blanket to Maintenance Technician Daniel Mooney during a celebration for the completion of the Tribal Ceremonial Fishing Platform at Willamette Falls in the Tribal gym on Wednesday, Nov. 7.



members Kennedy, George, Jack Giffen Jr., Kathleen George, Steve Bobb Sr., Denise Harvey, Lisa Leno and Michael Langley presented Pendleton blankets to the main workers who were at the falls everyday installing the fishing platform. Those employees included Fish & Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen, Aquatic Biologist Torey Wakeland, Biologist Brandon Weems, Engineering & Public Works Manager Jesse White, Utility Maintenance Supervisor Joe Loomis, Maintenance Technician Daniel Mooney, Fish & Wildlife Technician Matt Zimbrick, Groundskeeper Nick Kimsey, GIS Coordinator Alex Drake and employees of contractor Chris Scholten Construction in Willamina.

“It took this whole organization to make this happen,” Fullerton said. “Everyone really contributed to this project.”

Elder and former longtime Tribal Council Chairwoman Kathryn Harrison offered to hug and thank those who did the hard work, ferrying heavy equipment and supplies across Willamette River from the Oregon City side to the West Linn side and navigating slick rocks to install the platform. The employees took her up on the offer and each received a hug and heartfelt thank you.

Tribal Council also honored Fullerton with a Pendleton blanket for his work in getting the platform built.

All Tribal employees received a black sweatshirt and can of salmon. The back of the sweatshirt bears an image of a Tribal member dipnetting over the words “Keeping Culture Alive at Willamette Falls.”

“The one thing I will say about our people is that we don’t give up,” Kennedy said. “That seed has been planted in you all as well. It was planted in me that we have to move forward. This is the future of our children. That is why we do this, for our children so they will know who they are. That they will be able to, with pride, say, ‘I’m a Grand Ronde Indian.’” ■



Former Tribal Council Chairwoman Kathryn Harrison embraces Utility Maintenance Supervisor Joe Loomis during a celebration for the completion of the Tribal Ceremonial Fishing Platform at Willamette Falls held in the Tribal gym on Wednesday, Nov. 7.