

Walking On...

Brent Warren Merrill

Dec. 31, 1960 – Oct. 16, 2020

On Friday, Oct. 16, Brent Merrill, Tribal member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, journalist and father of three, walked on at the age of 59.

Brent was born on Dec. 31, 1960, in Dallas, Ore. He grew up in Eugene with his mother, Donna Stronach, and his brother, Donn Grishaber. He attended Marist High School and later went on to attend Western Oregon University and later graduated with an associate degree from Northwest Indian College. He married in 1984 and had three children, Aaron, Ashlee and Erika.

He worked as a journalist for many years and as the editor for *Smoke Signals*, the Tribal newspaper. During his time there it won many national awards and he took a small Tribal newsletter and turned it into a nationally recognized publication. He had a passion for writing, photography and his Tribe.

He was an avid collector of Hot Wheels, had a passion for sports and you could find him most Sundays on the golf course. The greatest love of his life were his four grandchildren: Violet, Amelia, Lennon and Andrew. He loved being a "Papa" more than any other accomplishment in his long, distinguished career.

He was preceded in death by his father, Warren Merrill, and is survived by his mother, brother, three children and four grandchildren. Bollman Funeral Home is caring for the family.



Tony Lee Cummings

Jan. 22, 1961 – Oct. 7, 2020

Tony Lee Cummings, 59, of Lebanon passed away on Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020, in Albany.

Tony was born Jan. 22, 1961, in El Cajon, Calif., the son of Eugene and Elsie (Jeffer) Cummings. Tony spent the majority of his life in Lacombe and graduated from Lebanon High School in 1979.

He then served in the Navy as a machinist mate from 1979-82. In the service, he learned how to play the harmonica and would then play it for Kybo and Sage.

Tony worked as a construction millwright for most of his life. He was very proud to be a Grand Ronde Tribal member. He also belonged to the Lebanon Elks and the American Legion Post 51.

Tony enjoyed riding at the dunes, elk hunting, camping, making people laugh and loved finding humor in everything. His favorite vacation was to Moab, Utah, with his wife, which was an item crossed off his bucket list.

He married Susan Lynn Weaver on Dec. 21, 2009, in Las Vegas, Nev., and she survives him. Other survivors include his children, Korby (April) Cummings, Larae (Aaron) Christiansen, Keri Trembath, Teri Trembath, Gator (Audrey) Trembath and Nichole (Nicho) Rodriguez; grandchildren, Calvin Little, Cede Little, Neil Fontaine, Cessna Trembath, Hunter Hahn, Charles Trembath III, A.J. Trembath, Kaedence Cummings, Dantae Rodriguez and McKenzie Christiansen; great-grandchildren, Taine Fontaine, Devin Fontaine and Charley Goodwin; brother, Barney Cummings of Lancaster, Calif.; sisters, Lori Humphrey of Turner, Ore., and Pauline Porter of Stayton, Ore; and father, Eugene Cummings. He was preceded in death by his mother.

A public viewing was held Friday, Oct. 9, at Huston Jost Funeral Home in Lebanon.

A private memorial due to COVID-19 restrictions was held Tuesday, Oct. 13. To leave an online condolence for the family, go to www.hustonjost.com.



Nichols joins Warrior Songs leadership committee

Tribal member and Navy veteran Shelly Nichols has been named to the leadership committee for the planned 2025 release of "Native Indigenous Voices: Warrior Songs Vol. 6." Nichols is a military sexual trauma survivor and attended Warrior Songs' Creative Arts Healing retreat held in Spokane, Wash., in November 2013. From that, she served as one of five women on the "Woman at War: Warrior Songs Vol. 2" leadership committee and her song, "Warrior Wings," appeared on the CD and won the Pop Song of the Year award at the 2019 Native American Music Awards. Nichols lives in Moses Lake, Wash. She joins Native veteran Melissa Doud and three other yet to be named Native veterans on the leadership committee. ■

Other passings

Byron Victor Labonte

June 8, 1932 – Oct. 26, 2020

Tribal Elder Byron Victor Labonte Sr. walked on Monday, Oct. 26, 2020, at the age of 88. West Valley Funeral Home in Sheridan is assisting the family.

At press time, there wasn't any information regarding a funeral service.



GRAND RONDE POLICE LOG



POLICE LOG continued from page 15

- Trespass reported in the area of Blacktail Drive. A male was issued a citation and released.
- Report of neglect in the 100 block of Wind River Drive.
- Citizen contact occurred in the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Report of a stolen vehicle in the 27100 block of Salmon River Highway. A male was located and arrested for possession of the stolen vehicle and possession of methamphetamine.
- Assist outside agency by covering for Yamhill County deputies on a protection order violation in Willamina.

Tuesday, Oct. 6

- Emotionally distressed person reported in the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Assist outside agency with a domestic disturbance in the 28800 block of Salmon River Highway. Officers provided cover for Polk County deputies during their investigation.
- Report of an overpay in the 27100 block of Salmon River Highway. It was determined to be a civil issue.
- Warrant arrest occurred in the 27100 block of Salmon River Highway. A female was cited and released for her warrant.
- Gaming violation reported in the 27100 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Assist outside agency by helping Oregon Department of Human Services employees with a home visit in the area of Tilixam Circle.
- Domestic dispute reported in the 9600 block of Raven Loop. It was determined to be non-criminal.
- Domestic dispute reported in the 27100 block of Salmon River Highway.
- Assist outside agency with a cover request in the Willamina area.

Wednesday, Oct. 7

- Suspicious vehicle reported in the area of Grand Ronde and Agency

Creek roads.

- Emotionally distressed person reported in the 9500 block of Raven Loop.
- Suspicious activity reported in the 27100 block of Salmon River Highway. A vehicle had backed into a ditch and the driver of the vehicle was able to get it out.
- Citizen contact occurred in the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Driving complaint reported in the area of milepost 23 on Highway 18. A vehicle was not maintaining its lane.
- Suspicious vehicle reported in the area of Tye Road. A juvenile driver was in possession of marijuana and the marijuana was seized.
- Assist outside agency with a domestic dispute in the 8300 block of Grand Ronde Road. Provided cover for Polk County deputies.
- Attempt to locate a hit-and-run suspect leaving Lincoln City.
- Assist outside agency with an attempt to locate a female lost in the woods in the area of Firehall Road. The female was located.

Thursday, Oct. 8

- Attempt to locate stolen vehicle in the Willamina area. The vehicle was located by Yamhill County deputies.
- Assist outside agency with a three vehicle crash in the area of milepost 23 on Highway 18. An officer assisted with traffic control.
- Citizen contact occurred in the 9600 block of Grand Ronde Road.
- Welfare check performed in the area of Tilixam Circle and Raven Loop.
- Welfare check performed in the area of Raven Loop.
- Driving complaint received in the area of milepost 12 on Highway 18. The vehicle was not maintaining its lane.
- Single vehicle crash involving a deer in the area of Highway 18 and Hebo Road.

Compiled by Grand Ronde Tribal Police
Department Officer Clint Cardwell.