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JUNE 15, 2022



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AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE · SMOKESIGNALS.ORG

Floral Parade reblooms

Casino float 'Returning to Our Roots' depicts camas harvesting

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

PORTLAND — For the first time since June 2019, a Spirit Mountain Casino float trundled out of Veterans Memorial Coliseum during the return of the Grand Floral Parade on Saturday, June 11.

The parade was canceled, like so many other events, in 2020 and '21 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The casino's float, "Returning to Our Roots," featured a Native girl wearing dentalium earrings and harvesting camas bulbs. On her back was a large gathering basket made of corn husks that had been christened with real camas seeds. On the rear of the float were a mother and baby deer observing the girl's activity.

Spirit Mountain Casino Public Relations Administrator Jocelyn Huffman said the design of the float was a collaboration with Cultural Resources Department employees Bobby Mercier and Travis Stewart, who provided 19th-century photos of Native women gathering camas.

However, Huffman said, the casino wanted the float to depict a modern woman to reinforce the fact that Grand Ronde Tribal members are still here.

Grand Ronde Royalty — Senior Miss Grand Ronde Kaleigha Simi, Veterans Senior Queen Tasina Bluehorse, Junior Miss Grand Ronde Marie Quenelle, Veterans Little Miss Queen



Spirit Mountain Casino's float "Returning to Our Roots" depicts a young Tribal woman harvesting camas bulbs. The Grand Floral Parade was held in Portland on Saturday, June 11.

Leloo Quenelle, Veterans Junior Queen KaLea Liebelt and Little Miss Grand Ronde Ila Mercier — walked in front of the float through Memorial Coliseum and outdoors to the VIP seating area before the float started unaccompanied on the parade route proper.

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From left, Veterans Little Miss Queen Leloo Quenelle and Little Miss Grand Ronde Ila Mercier lead the Grand Ronde Royalty as they accompany the Spirit Mountain Casino float.



Photos by Timothy J. Gonzalez

Krehbiel elevating Native art in Oregon City

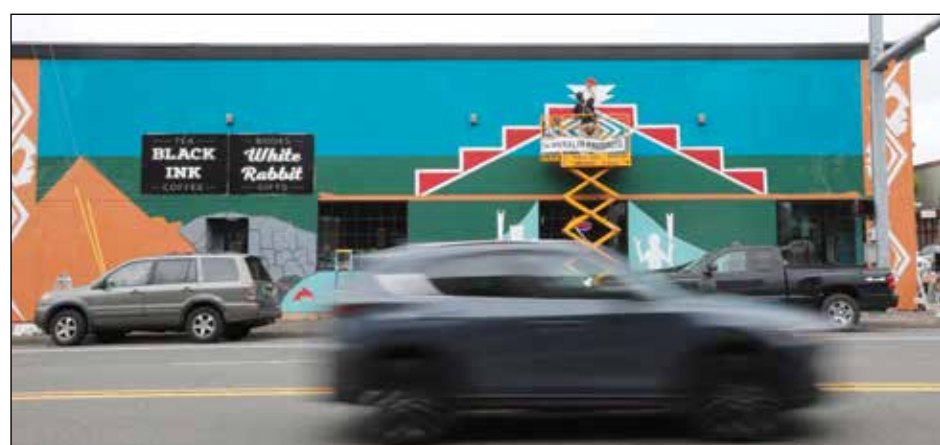


Photo by Timothy J. Gonzalez

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals assistant editor/staff writer

OREGON CITY — Tribal artisan Brian Krehbiel is taking his work to new heights — literally.

The 42-year-old Grand Ronde Tribal member has been commissioned to paint his first mural near

a major intersection in downtown Oregon City and directly across the street from the Tribe's property at the former Blue Heron Paper Mill.

The 75-by-20-foot painting on the outside of White Rabbit Books &

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Tribal member Brian Krehbiel works on a mural he was commissioned to paint on the side of the White Rabbit Books & Black Ink Coffee building in Oregon City on Thursday, June 9. The mural is across from the Blue Heron site and is intended to be a mirror of Willamette Falls.