

Making the most of the war



Emmalynn Warren, 11, dances during the 2025 Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, July 12.

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after a crash on Highway 18 that killed a McMinnville High School student. Detoured onto Hebo Road, traffic was backed up for miles as drivers tried to re-enter the highway. With the tragic outcome yet unknown on Saturday, the Tribe and friends came together to celebrate and honor veterans.

The Tribe has expressed deep frustration over the ODFW Commission's decision but the weekend was for dancing, and dance people did, making the most of the warm weather and festive spirit.

There was no host drum this year, as the Tribe switched to a day-pay model. Drums included Huckleberry Hill, Northern Black Horse and Bad Soul.

Tribal Council member Denise Harvey welcomed the crowd on Friday evening, telling them, "It's an honor to welcome you all here this evening...I'm so glad to honor

our veterans."

Harvey and Tribal Council member Brenda Tuomi participated in Friday's grand entry.

Emcee Carlos Calica (Wasco, Paiute and Yakama) told the crowd that the songs being performed had "been passed down for generations, for us to use and enjoy. They are equal to the national anthem."

Tribal member Anthony Quenelle served as arena director.

On Saturday, Mercier welcomed the crowd, saying, "This is our time to shine." He encouraged younger members of the crowd to "take the time to thank our veterans."

Mercier noted the ODFW decision, saying that while it was disappointing, "We always come back stronger."

In addition to Mercier, Tribal Council members who participated in Saturday's grand entry included Secretary Jon A. George and council members Harvey, Kathleen George, Matthew Haller and Tuomi.



Abraham Shippentower (Umatilla) sang an honor song with his family and gave the invocation.

Undeterred by the heat, children ran to the dancing floor after grand

entry, some followed by parents or older siblings.

The Veterans Royalty Pageant took place Friday morning in the Governance Center Atrium, with results announced that evening at the powwow grounds. The 2025-26 Veterans Royalty Court includes Tiny Tot Warrior William Craig, Veterans Warrior Brendyn Smallwood, Veterans Little Miss Princess Elesia Crawley, Veterans Little Miss Queen Elizabeth Ulestad and Veterans Junior Miss Queen Ila Mercier.

The outgoing 2024-25 Veterans Royalty Court consisted of Tiny Tot Princess Elesia Crawley, Tiny Tot Warrior William Craig, Veterans Little Miss Queen Ulali Quenelle, Princesses Harper Hernandez, Elizabeth Ulestad and Emmalynn Warren; Veterans Junior Miss Queen Leloo Quenelle and Veterans Senior Miss Queen Sophia Grout.

Craig, who is 6, and Crawley, 7, said they were having fun on Saturday.

"I like the dance a lot," Craig said, adding that he also liked his headdress, pointing out that it had two feathers at the back.

"I love to see everyone dance, and I love to see people like the drums," Crawley said.

The Veterans Summit and Resource Fair took place Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the powwow grounds and included the debut of



Tribal member Jordan Mercier dances during the 2025 Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow at uyxat Powwow Grounds Saturday, July 12.



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