



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

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SERVING

OREGON VETERANS

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Government-to-Government Relationships Annual Report January-December 2006

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) continues to fulfill its mission of advocating for Oregon veterans, their families, and their survivors. As such, ODVA strives to foster cooperative relationships with the nine federally recognized tribes of Oregon. This annual report identifies activities that ODVA participated in during the 2006 calendar year. Continued efforts to strengthen relationships with the Native American tribes of Oregon are mutually beneficial for Government-to-Government effectiveness.

Below is a list of the activities and interactions involving or relating to the tribes that ODVA has been involved with over the last year as well as those the agency intends to pursue in 2007. ODVA plans to continue these efforts and continue to build and strengthen our working relationships with the Oregon tribes, their governments, and their members.

Tribal Activities and Interactions during 2006

- Director Willis attended a planning meeting with Northwest Indian Veterans' Association (NIVA) for discussion about honoring veterans. (January)
- Director Willis attended two meetings held the same evening, one with Grand Ronde Honor Guard members followed by a meeting with the local NIVA chapter. (February)
- Members of the Department's Executive Staff, including the Director and Deputy Director, regularly attended meetings to assist NIVA members with planning and coordination of a Gold Star Families Honors luncheon. (April)
- Awarded 80 Warriors Medals of Valor to Oregon Gold Star Families. The Warriors Medals were presented to honor the service of their loved ones who lost their lives during WWII, Korean War, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, and other conflicts while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Several Mothers Medals of Honor were also presented. The event was organized by ODVA, Coalition of Troop Support, the Afghan-Iraqi Freedom Memorial Foundation, Marshall Tall Eagle II, Inc., and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Members of the Klamath Tribes performed the blessing of the room. (May)

- Val Conley, Administrator of the Veterans' Service Division, worked with NIVA members to coordinate the presentation of more than 360 Warriors Medals of Valor at the Oregon Women Veterans Conference hosted by ODVA. The Grand Ronde Honor Guard posted the colors. (March)
- During a special presentation at the Albany American Legion Post 10, ODVA Director Willis, Deputy Director Brown, and Marshall Tall Eagle Serna presented the Warriors Medal of Valor and the Mothers Medal of Honor to Grace Burkhart for her son Ron Burkhart who was killed in Vietnam. (May)
- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Traveling Wall came to Oregon and was on display for a duration of four days at Lincoln Memorial Cemetery in Portland. During that span of time, Director Willis was featured as a guest speaker and NIVA members presented veterans with the Warriors Medal of Valor and mothers of veterans with the Mothers Medal of Honor. (May)
- Many ODVA administrators and staff attended the Tribal Information Day at the Oregon State Capitol. (May)
- On Memorial Day, Director Willis and Deputy Director Brown delivered speeches during a Grand Ronde ceremony. Both Willis and Brown are veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, and their names were inscribed in marble on the Air Force and Army memorial walls respectively of the Grand Ronde Veterans Memorial. (May)
- Several ODVA staff attended the Fourteenth Annual Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans' Pow-Wow. ODVA Veterans' Service Officers partnered with Grand Ronde and Yamhill County to provide information and assist veterans and their families with benefits. (July)
- The Color Guard procession for the 2006 Flag Day Massing of the Colors, coordinated by members of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) with the assistance of ODVA, was held at the State Capitol and led by the Grand Ronde Honor Guard. Deputy Director Brown was guest speaker at the event. (July)
- ODVA Director Willis met with the Commander of the National Native American Veterans Association in Dallas, Texas to discuss veteran related issues of mutual concern. (July)
- Director Willis presented the Warriors Medal of Valor to Vietnam Veteran Ron James. James retired from the United States Navy and is a member of The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians. (August)
- NIVA members Marshall Tall Eagle Serna and his wife Laretta worked with Director Willis and other ODVA staff to present the Warriors Medal of Valor to residents of the Oregon Veterans' Home. Members from the Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association and staff of the Home also assisted during the presentation. (September)

- Contact information for the nine Oregon federally recognized tribes was added to the Veterans' Service Officer Directory published by ODVA. Publication of Tribal Veterans' Service Officers in the Directory was continued. (October)
- Director Willis and Deputy Director Brown attended the State and Tribal Government-to-Government summit in Canyonville, Oregon. (December)
- Standing invitation to the members of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes to attend the quarterly Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee meeting. (Quarterly)

Planned Tribal Activities and Interactions for 2007

- ODVA plans to continue the practice of inviting members of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes to attend the quarterly Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee meetings.
- We are beginning work on a publication of veterans' memorials. This publication will also contain tribal memorials.
- The Director, Deputy Director, and other appropriate staff will continue to attend meetings and events held by tribes or pertaining to tribal veterans affairs.
- The ODVA office will continue listing the nine federally recognized tribes and tribal Veterans Service Officers in the Veterans Service Officers Directory.
- Continue to promote and report on tribal veteran issues online at www.Oregon.gov/ODVA and in the bi-monthly VETS NEWS publication.
- ODVA's communications staff will continue to distribute tribal news and event information.
- ODVA Veterans' Services section will continue to invite the Tribal Veterans' Service Officers to the annual CVSO training.

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