

## **Paddle to Quinault canoes ashore, celebration continues**

### **Local News**

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**TAHOLAH, WA (8/2/13)--** The Paddle to Quinault ceremony got underway with great style Thursday as dozens of traditional tribal cedar canoes from points near and far came ashore at Point Grenville near Taholah, a spectacle witnessed by thousands of Indian and non-Indian cheering spectators. One by one the giant canoes were welcomed ashore by Quinault Nation leaders and Quinault dancers and singers as they rode the Pacific waves in, some completing a journey of hundreds of miles. The pullers (paddlers) then hefted their heavy canoes through the crowd to the safety and comfort of dry land, a count of 69 canoes in all. Following several hours of the traditional welcoming and landings, it was time for the host tribe to feed the canoe families and thousands of both Indian and non-Indian guests, then to commence potlatch activities which will continue until Tuesday, August 6. The welcome is extended to all, and traditional food, dance, music, storytelling and gifting are all provided with open arms and friendly smiles. The 2013 Canoe Journey Celebration is underway!

Quinault Tribal Councilman Rich Underwood, who handled much of the emcee duties during the landings said all went well. He said there had been some rough times for some of the canoes facing the elements of the ocean, but everyone is safe and for that he was very grateful. "This is a truly awesome event," he said. "I'm so glad to see so many people on the beach. This is the most people this beach has seen in over 100 years!" "I am so excited for the Quinault people," said Quinault President Fawn Sharp. "It is so important to celebrate our traditions—to keep our heritage alive for future generations. It's a sunny day for our people." Emmett Oliver, now 99 and the most elder Quinault, was on hand to witness the landings. He was the Quinault leader who organized the first journey in 1989, the Paddle to Seattle, which was celebrated in concert with the State of Washington Centennial Celebration. It has been celebrated, with various tribes and British Columbia First Nations hosting the event ever since. Quinault hosted it once before, in 2002. Since then it has tripled in size, and Oliver says he is very pleased that it has been so successful in helping the Indian people reconnect with their history, culture and heritage. Marilyn Bard, Oliver's daughter, said his 14 year-old grandson, Owen, participated as a member of a canoe team for the first time this year. "That shows how powerful, and what a source of pride, this is," she said. The theme of this year's journey, "Honoring our Warriors," was repeatedly acknowledged, as veterans were honored again and again for their service. Among the many photographers and videographers who are documenting this year's journey is Chris Ayre, preeminent American Indian filmmaker and producer of "Smoke Signals." Ayre's filming of the event has been commissioned by Quinault and will be made available to the public at some time in the future to be announced. Volunteers for the Paddle to Quinault are still welcome and encouraged. For more information, go to [www.PaddletoQuinault.org](http://www.PaddletoQuinault.org). Paddle to Quinault is an alcohol and drug free event.