

Tribes honor Vic Atiyeh



Photos courtesy of the Museum at Warm Springs

Far left, Tribal Councilwoman Bernice Mitchell arrives at the reception. At left, Atiyeh is congratulated by Rudy Clements. Above, Charles Littleleaf plays flute music for the guests.

He has been a longtime friend to many tribal members, and a supporter of many tribal interests. For his friendship and work on behalf of the tribes, former Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh recently received a rare honor.

The Museum at Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes hosted a special dinner in honor of Atiyeh. The event was held at the Portland Art Museum Grand Ballroom.

In part the dinner was a celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the Museum at Warm Springs. Atiyeh, who

has been on the museum board since the very start, gave the following statement:

“A remarkable characteristic of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs has been decisions made by tribal leadership at critical times in their history that had enormous long-term impact. Among those decisions was the vote to appropriate scarce dollars to acquire cultural artifacts from the members that all too often left the reservation with traders.

“Behind that act was the dream that maybe – someday, somewhere, somehow – there would be a museum. A museum to forever hold the treasures of

the tribes, but also to retrieve and forever keep their fast disappearing language, culture and traditions.

“Decades later that dream came to life in a structure known as the Museum at Warm Springs. Now we celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the opening

“The reason for its being is still evolving, the acceptance by tribal members is still strengthening, the awareness and travelers has yet to be broadly acknowledged.

“But no longer is there a dream – that has been replaced by a beautiful structure, managed by wonderful, dedicated

people and nurtured by the Tribal Council.”

Atiyeh was elected governor of Oregon in 1978. He won re-election in 1982, serving until January of 1987. Atiyeh also served in the state House of Representatives from 1959 to 1964, and as a state senator from 1965 to 1978.

He was known for an advocacy of less government spending, and as a supporter of the environment.

In the region he is credited with helping put 12 miles along the Deschutes River into public ownership.