

2019 PIONEER DAYS

Willette's smile illuminated the room

As usual, it was a program interlaced with traditions, along with a humorous off-script experience.

During the video presentation Willette family members offered the exact same accolades to Donna a half dozen times ... because the computer projecting the video got stuck on loop-and-repeat mode. That prompted rounds of laughter from the queen and the crowd.

There were many touching moments: the smiling, social interaction between friends and family, with Donna and former queens in the middle of it all.

There was the handmade, illustrated book **Gail Berndt** made containing the Queen's Poem she wrote and read to the crowd.

There was the accordion and guitar music performed by locals **Floyd Rogalski** and **Louie Osmonovich**, icons of the coronation there again to build their familiar bridge to last year's coronation and every coronation going back a decade-plus.

At one point master of ceremonies **Jay McGowan**, Mayor of Cle Elum, noted there were a lot of children at the event, either in attendance or performing.

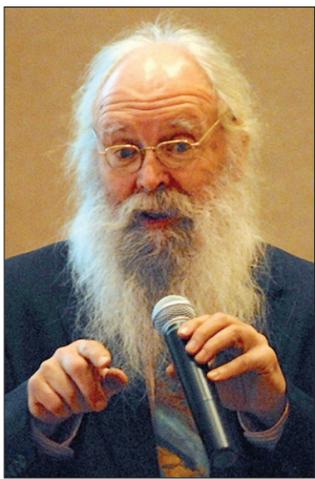
Amanda Wudi's *On Pointe Dance* 'tiny tot' ensemble performed a cute number, introduced themselves, and then did splits for the queen. One youngster topped that with a cartwheel.

Young Cub Scouts from Pack 486 were there to present colors and join in the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

Also getting into the act were Willette's five grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Six-year-old great grandson **Austin Frienere** brought in the crown on a pillow. His great aunt, **Cindy Rogers**, said he treated his job like he was working for the Queen of England.

"He ran around telling everyone his great grandma was a queen," she laughed.

Soloist and great granddaughter **Mandi Frienere**, 9, sang *Grandma, Tell Me About the Good 'Ole Days*. The rest



CLE ELUM MAYOR Jay McGowan once again was on hand as Master of Ceremonies.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo - 2019



CORONATION Committee member Gail Berndt wrote and read the Queen's Poem.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo - 2019



THE QUEEN'S CAMPSITE set up to the left of the ballroom stage.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo

There wasn't a detail overlooked by the Coronation Committee with regard to decorations. Several patrons commented on the fantastic job and the enormous amount of time it must have taken to get the Putnam Centennial Center ready for the big event, but asked about the chore, four on the Committee we talked to just smiled and said, "We had so much fun."

Committee member **Toni Fields** had this to say, "We met about five times to brainstorm on what we would do this year.

"Once we knew what we wanted to do, we collected a lot of stuff we had at our homes, I think mostly from mine and Rachele's," she laughed, "and we started shopping, making things, collecting photos of Donna, and getting video clips of her family offering her their love and admiration. We had a lot of help lugging everything into the Putnam Centennial Center the night before."

Indeed. The phrase 'lugging everything' doesn't quite do justice to what appeared to be a Herculean task. Here below is the short list of decorations.

A campsite complete with a tent and canvas, a foldable camp chair, a fire ring, a coffee pot, a woodpile and hand-saw, ornamentals of raccoon and squirrel families, a lantern on a tree stump, a dried chunk of tree trunk where the squirrel family 'romped,' several artificial evergreen trees, a boulder the size of a foot

cushion (ornamental?), a pair of hiking shoes former Queen **Anita Pardini** used for collecting mushrooms, and the backpack Donna used in the mountains for years.

There were pinecones and evergreen boughs – and flowers of every color everywhere: in baskets, buckets, pots, planters and centerpiece vases at each table resting on circular, saw-cut sections of a tree.

The committee brought in a five-foot high wooden bookshelf shaped like a boat that housed an ornamental squirrel, a wooden sign with the silhouette of a black bear displaying the words, "My heart belongs in the woods," a duck decoy, binoculars, the whitened skull of a stag (with antlers), and a fishing pole.

Salt and pepper around the room were a basket of individually packaged smores, little plastic ketchup-cups filled with trail mix, a three-rock cairn, a propane stove, a three-foot ornamental black bear holding up a welcome sign, stuffed animals of the kind you find in the forest (including a porcupine), enlarged photos of Donna in the mountains with frames illuminated by marquis lights, ornamental mushrooms, a six-foot post with eight or more directional signs bearing the names of the places Donna hiked – and a bowl of real eggs commemorating the 12 years Donna drove an egg delivery van in the Upper County (circa 1970s), to the tune of 2,000 dozen a week.



QUEEN'S CORONATION COMMITTEE: (L-R) Sherry Osmonovich, Teri Greene, Gail Berndt, Rachele Rogalski, Queen Donna, Tasha Lanphere, Tiffany Greene, Sena Lanphere and Toni Fields. Not pictured: Nikki Dearing and Cindy Rogers.

Photo courtesy of Tasha Lanphere

of the kids sang *Happy Trails to You* before the event closed.

Cindy mentioned that four-year-old great grandson **Finn Standish** was a little upset he didn't get to sing. So at the end of the coronation McGowan gave him the microphone. He sang *Baa Baa Black Sheep*. "He practiced the song for several weeks," Cindy laughed.

"You know, they were all worried about stage fright, but that night we couldn't get them off the stage!"

Other players

Members of the Coronation Committee acknowledged

Nikki Dearing for the job she did putting together the digital presentation, which included a slideshow of past queens, **Susan Daniel** for handing out flowers to the former queens, the Willette family for supporting the committee, guitarist **Michael Lancaster** for accompanying Willette's great grandchildren, and the good volunteers at the Putnam Centennial Center, keyword *volunteers*, who showed up in force to help with the event.

Beloved former queens

Of the 50 Pioneer Queens to date, seven are still here with us. Two of them could not make the coronation: **Tootsie Georgeson** (2017) and **Doris Maras** (2012).

Those who were there: **Pat Woodell** (2008), **Olga Newton** (2011), **Bev Ballard** (2015), **Leona Malcolm** (2016), and **Vi Burke** (1996), who wore her mother-in-law's (a Carollo) dress brought to America in 1909.

On the occasion of the coronation's 50th anniversary, this quote from poet **Stanislaw Jerzy Lec** goes out to Tootsie, Doris, Pat, Olga, Violet, Bev, Leona, Shar, Donna, and the 49 other queens they've succeeded.

"Youth is a gift of nature – but age is a work of art."

Background Story
"Oscar for Set Design"



MANDI FRIENERE, age 9, accompanied by guitarist Michael Lancaster sang a song to her great-grandmother Queen Donna Willette.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo - 2019

ARRF PRESENTS THE FAST AND THE FURRIEST challenged to compete in the ROSLYN 2019 DOGGIE OLYMPICS

7.13.19
at Runje Park • Registration 9:30AM / Events Start 10AM
www.ARRFAnimalRescue.org / Find Us on Facebook

ARRF Animal Rescue
\$5 per Event or 5+ Events for \$25
All proceeds benefit ARRF Animal Rescue
AWARDS FOR:
Most Unusual Trick
Peanut Butter Lick
Frisbee Throw
Dunking for Dogs
Musical Hoops
"Humphrey Doggie Dash"
(3 Weight Categories)

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!
ROSLYN DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
NKC TRIBUNE
COMMUNICATION PATHWAYS

NEED a Splatky Display

To Promote Your Summer Bash?

We've Got ya Covered!

Looking for a custom sign or banner with color text and graphics options? WE DO THAT TOO! Ask us for details

Also ask about: Stickers, Postcards, Flyers, Wristbands and more!

Tribune Office Supply & Printing
807 W. Davis St. – Cle Elum, WA (By Safeway and Taco Bell)
OPEN: Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM – 509-674-2511