



# NCAI hosts 68th conference in Portland

By **Jeremy Wade Shockley**  
*The Southern Ute Drum*

Under the title "Footprints into the future: Our shared journey toward tribal prosperity," the 68th annual meeting of the National Congress of American Indian opened its doors in Portland on Monday, Oct. 31.

Tribal leaders from across Indian Country convened in Portland's downtown convention center to discuss annual business and hold their membership elections.

Opening ceremonies filled the halls, representing a multitude of tribal nations. For many, their respective veterans carried their flags. Southern Ute veterans Roderick Grove and Ronnie Baker represented the Southern Ute people.

Dancers, elders, dignitaries and drummers filled the convention hall leading up to the opening remarks.

"It always brings a renewed sense of pride" when the congress comes together, said President Jefferson Keel said.

U.S. Representative Jay Enslee, D-Wash., was among the opening day's speakers.

"The price of sovereignty is eternal diligence," he began. "It



photos Jeremy Wade Shockley/SU DRUM

*Jefferson Keel, president of the National Congress of American Indians, welcomes attendees to the 68th annual convention in Portland. Hundreds of tribes from across North America were represented, including the Southern Utes.*

is important that the federal government does not target tribal budgets as they look to cut the national debt."

During the executive director's report, Jacqueline Johnson Pata said the congress today enjoys unprecedented access to the administration.

Internet gaming, health care, and violence against women were among the many topics of discussion on this first day of the leadership conference.

"We have lessons of resilience. As Indian nations and sovereign people, we will not back down from our responsibilities," Keel said in his opening address. "We are working in challenging times, but ones that offer promise. ... As we engage these challenges & opportunities this week, let us work together."



## Re-elect Marge Borst for Tribal Council 2011

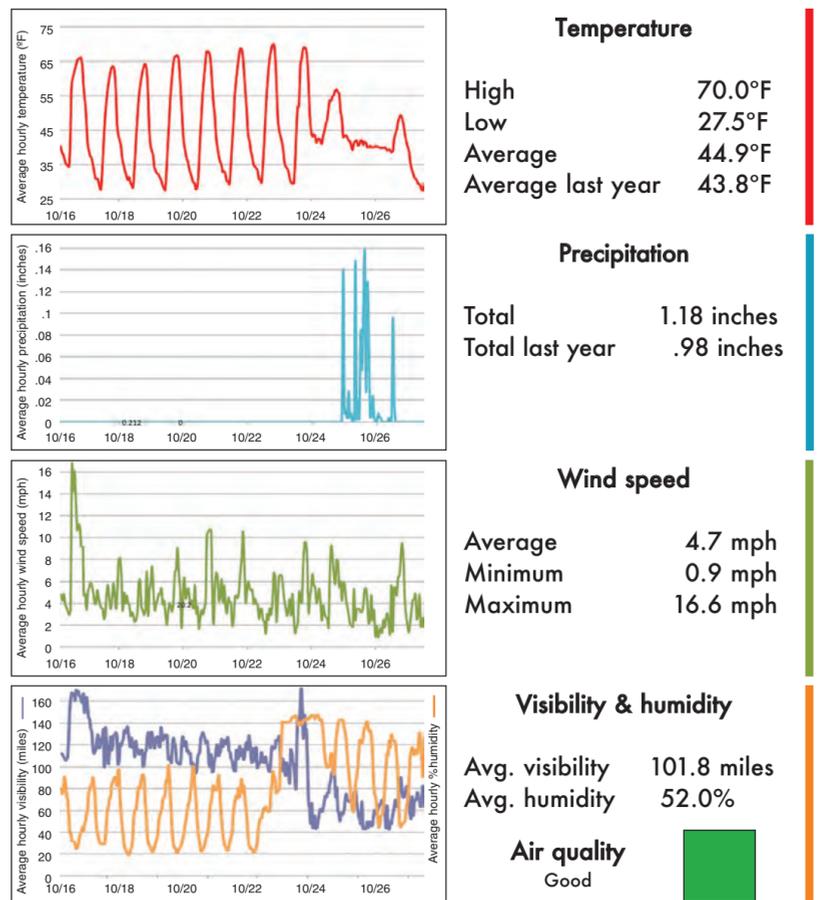
- ✓ **A leader who is compassionate, loyal, dependable, fun-loving, humble...**
- ✓ **A traditional dancer**
- ✓ **A leader for the cause...**

### Local Ignacio Weather

<b>Friday, Nov. 4</b>  Partly Sunny, High 63° F	<b>Saturday, Nov. 5</b>  Rain/snow likely 60%, High 37° F	<b>Sunday, Nov. 6</b>  Mostly sunny, High 42° F
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Weather data for October 16 - October 26



Data compiled by Southern Ute Environmental Programs

Weather forecasts collected from www.NOAA.gov