



## Wilbur E. Ternyik Tribute

### *PERSONAL BACKGROUND:*

Born in Astoria, Ore., Jan. 26, 1926. Graduate of Warrenton High School. Married to Joyce Ann Miller 1962. They raised five children. Resident of Florence, Oregon since 1947.

Ternyik's family lineage goes back to Solomon Smith, a pioneer who came to Oregon from Boston in 1832, and his wife Celiast (also known as Helen), the daughter of Chief Coboway of the Clatsop Indian Tribe. Coboway and his tribe provided invaluable assistance to the Lewis and Clark Expedition while they were camped at Fort Clatsop in the winter of 1805-1806. When Lewis and Clark left Oregon, they gave their fort on the Columbia River to Coboway. The Smiths settled in the Clatsop Plains where they worked as missionaries and operated the first public school in what is now Clatsop County. Smith was one of the pioneer leaders who participated in an 1843 meeting at Champoeg that led to Oregon statehood. He later became an Oregon state senator. Ternyik remains proud of his Clatsop Indian ancestry, is a keen student of Indian history, and has an extensive collection of Indian artifacts.

### *MILITARY SERVICE:*

Joined the United States Marine Corps in 1944. Wounded in the leg by machine gun fire May 10, 1945 in a battle on the island of Okinawa. Received Purple Heart award. Spent eight months in hospitals before being honorably discharged.

### *PROFESSIONAL CAREER:*

As a young man, Wilbur worked more than a decade with the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service learning about plants and how to use them for erosion control and dunes stabilization work. Started his own dunes stabilization business, Wave Beach Grass Nursery, in 1953. During the past half century, he has developed an international reputation as an expert in not only dunes stabilization and erosion control, but as an expert in the delineation, restoration and creation of wetlands and marshes. Has been involved in federal wetlands research projects on the Columbia River and has been employed by the U.S. government to teach wetlands and marsh restoration techniques to natural resource agency personnel.



#### **COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ROLE:**

Wilbur was the driving force, along with former Gov. Tom McCall, in a coast wide effort to persuade the Oregon Legislature to appoint the Oregon Coastal Conservation and Development Commission (OCCDC). This group, established

in 1971, spent 4 years developing suggested guidelines for the management of natural resources such as estuaries, beaches, dunes and shorelands along the Oregon Coast with a goal of striking a balance between conservation and development. Ternyik headed the 30-member group made up of coastal public officials, as well as six governor-appointed members representing statewide environmental interests. The work of OCCDC and similar efforts in other coastal states may have headed off the possibility of federal land use being mandated for the Oregon Coast. OCCDC's work had a major influence on the coastal land-use goals later adopted and now overseen by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission. The early work of Ternyik and the commission helped Oregon gain national recognition as a leader in wise management of coastal resources.



#### **OTHER PUBLIC SERVICE:**

Sixteen years as member of the Florence City Council and 29 years on the Port of Siuslaw Commission at Florence. Served multiple terms as mayor and port president. Made numerous trips to Washington, D.C., to lobby for continued federal support for dredging Oregon coastal

ports. Represented his community on the Lane Council of Governments, the Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association and the Cascade West Economic Development District. Recognized as Florence's First Citizen in 1971. He and his wife served for 15 years as volunteer wildlife rehabilitators working with state game officials to rehabilitate a variety of injured wild animals or serving as surrogate mothers for orphaned wildlife. He also assisted with the development of the Oregon Wetlands Mitigation Bank Act and the Tillamook Bay Restoration and Enhancement Program.