

Siletz Indian Housing Authority

Tribal housing plan adopted

BY CONNIE HOFFMAN
SIHA Director

The Tribal Council formally adopted the Tribal Housing Plan on March 23, 1998. This plan is required by the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) and governs the expenditure of the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) funds which the Tribe is due to receive this year.

We have been notified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that the amount of the block grant for our Tribe this year is \$3,049,103. The block grant replaces the operating subsidy that we have been receiving from HUD for the operation of our Rental and Mutual Help programs, the development grants that we have received to build new housing, and the amounts that we have

received to operate our Section 8 Program. The block grant amount is determined by a formula which is based on the needs of all Indians in our 11-county service area, as well as by the number of HUD housing units (including Section 8) that were in existence as of 9/30/97.

We are still receiving some HUD funds for Section 8 and our housing plan commits the Tribe to supplementing these with block grant funds so that we can continue to operate our Section 8 program at its current level.

We are in the process of submitting our Housing Plan to HUD. They will have 60 days to review it before releasing the funds, so we are looking at early summer before we will be able to access the block grant funds.

In addition to continuing our present programs, we plan to use

the block grant funds to expand down payment assistance to Tribal Members and also to establish an Emergency Housing Program to serve Tribal Members throughout the service area and beyond.

The Tribe has more flexibility for use of the block grant funds than we did with the HUD grants that have been received in earlier years. A substantial amount of the block grant funds are budgeted for support of the law enforcement program, which is essential for the protection of our residents. Block grant funds are also budgeted to support the Transitional Living Center, shelter for victims of domestic violence, Silatchee Park Resident Organization, handicapped accessibility, and water, sewer, and street improvements.

Our Housing Plan also covers the HUD grants that we received in 1996 and 1997 for the 20 homes to be built on the Dickenson property in Siletz. The Housing Board has approved the design and floor plans for these homes and we hope to be able to go out to bid by summer.

We also are in the midst of preparing specifications for a HUD-funded repair and improvement project for the 54 Mutual

Help homes, which will include new roofs, fencing, floor covering, street lighting, and other improvements. We plan to put this out to bid by late May.

Anyone who would like a copy of the Housing Plan as approved by Tribal Council, contact the Housing Authority Office.

A team of Tribal officials and staff worked for most of the past year preparing the plan. The team included Tribal Council Members Lillie Butler and Reggie Butler, Tribal Accountant Naomi Shadwick, Programs Manager Frank Petersen, HIP Coordinator Howard Roy, and myself.



1998 NESIKA ILLAHEE PAGEANT

The Pow-Wow Committee is now accepting applications for the

1998-1999 Pow Wow Royalty Pageant

This is for female Tribal members from the ages of seven to twenty-four.

The categories are as follows:

Little Miss Siletz — ages 7 to 12

Junior Miss Siletz — ages 13 to 17

Miss Siletz — ages 18 to 24

For more information or to pick up the applications, contact Craig S. Whitehead at:

(541) 444-8230 or 1-800-922-1399

or stop by my office at the Siletz Tribal Administration Building in Siletz.

The pageant will be held on Thursday, August 6, at the Siletz Tribal Community Center.

The candidates will be judged on their poise, knowledge of family and Tribal history, speaking ability, and their dance ability in the Feather Dance and Inter-Tribal Dance.



Important news regarding veterans health benefits

If you are a veteran, have a family member who is a veteran, or know somebody who is, this news may be of some interest to you or them. Please feel free to pass it along.

President Clinton has recently signed into law a bill that affects all veterans. This law states, in effect, that if a veteran has not registered at a Veteran Affairs Hospital since **October 1, 1996**, then on October 1, 1998 he or she will lose all VA medical benefits for life. To make it worse, the VA cannot notify veterans about it. That information must be disseminated via word of mouth.

Tom Todd from US West Veterans' Association called the local VA office and found out this information is true.

The VA recommended that everyone eligible for benefits come

by their office and sign up prior to the October 1 deadline, regardless of whether they have received treatment at a VA hospital since October 1, 1996. This way no one will slip through the cracks.

You will need to bring your DD-214 to your local VA office and it will only take about five minutes to complete the form. This will maintain your veterans benefits. If you cannot locate your DD-214, go to the VA office and they can help you obtain a copy.

To register or for more information, please call the McMinnville office at (503) 434-7503; the Portland VA Medical Center at 1-800-949-1004, ext. 55300; or the Portland VA office at 1-800-827-1000. You can also check on the Internet at: www.va.gov.