

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

Regarding the recent ballots sent to Siletz Tribal members, there are a couple details that tribal members need to know before voting.

First, the Tribal Council has been receiving some fringe benefits for a number of years without having voter approval. The medical and dental coverage has not been given to Tribal Council before now. It is not coincidental that since Contract Health Services has been cut, the Tribal Council wants medical and dental for themselves. Nor is it coincidental that they are asking voters for our approval during this time of outside scrutiny of the behavior of the Tribal Council. The real issue may be a proposed salary increase and personal comps, without a history, a definition, and no explanation; this ballot is really just another blank check.

Secondly, regarding the alcohol service in the casino showroom. Remember about five years ago, tribal members overwhelmingly voted that no alcohol be served at the casino. The casino has served alcohol all of these years; it has been against the vote of the tribal members. I am also concerned about the fact that asking the members to make an advisory vote conflicts with the constitutional requirement that General Council votes are binding upon the Tribal Council (Article VII, Section 2, Referendum). Thirdly, there was no notice given about this election.

Finally, to top all of the current confusion, Jessie Davis, Tribal Council member, reported during the elders board meeting that the ballots were sent out in error, the timing couldn't be worse, and she wouldn't vote for it herself. The Election Board chairman, Nancy McCrary, had apparently jumped the gun. She couldn't be reached for comment.

What can be done to avoid this kind of bungling? The only solution is to remove the election process from individuals who put their personal interests ahead of professional conduct and have our tribal elections conducted by a professional election firm.

Denise L. Peterson



To the editor:

To the Siletz Council and members, I would like to personally thank each and all of you for your thoughtfulness and hours of work in preparing such a scrumptious meal for all of those and my family after the funeral services for my daughter, Clarice. Many traveled many miles for the final goodbye to our loved one. Your hospitality will not be forgotten. May God bless each and every one.

Sincerely,

Myrtle Davis

To the editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some people who have helped us with funding our girls' basketball team (**Hotshot's**).

First, I'd like to thank the Tribal Council and the Ad-Hoc Committee members for their donation of \$250. That money helped pay our fee for the summer league out at The Hoop in Salem. Also, we'd like to thank all our other sponsors and the families of the kids we coach. All of this wouldn't be possible without your support and dedication to your kids.

During our summer league season we had eight wins and one loss; we finished our season on July 12. Playing at the 3-on-3 Hoopla Tournament, we played during the first three rounds, but were eliminated by the second day of play. It gave us a lot of opportunities to watch and learn from more-experienced teams.

Again, thank you for all everyone has done for us. And if I missed anyone, we appreciate and thank you as well.

Sincerely,

Willie Worman and family

Hotshot's girl's basketball team

To the editor:

Who is the tribe? According to headlines, "The Siletz Tribe" violated gaming laws. Delores Pigsley notified tribal members that the National Indian Gaming Commission findings are unsubstantiated! Compared to the detailed Notice of (Tribal Council) Violations given on the Internet site NIGC.gov, it appears that the Tribal Council is not taking the NIGC seriously.

Who is the tribe? Take the ballot to give the Tribal Council benefits, AKA medical/dental, and compare it to recent cuts in health services. Put that next to NIGC's notice of \$138,000 in personal benefits for Tribal Council, AKA casino comps, and remember the Tribal Council denies any wrongdoing. It looks like the Tribal Council is "the tribe." The answer should be "The tribal members are the tribe."

Tribal members are going to take losses for illegal activities of tribal government and its enterprises without having any direct involvement or control. The tribal members are the tribe. There is no check-and-balance system between the three branches of tribal government. Those branches are General Council, Tribal Council, and Tribal Court. General Council has remained unorganized all these years because our legislators, being Tribal Council, have never passed General Council bylaws for our approval.

For the tribe to fulfill its constitutionally provided tribal government, there must be

rules for the General Council to follow. For instance, if there were General Council bylaws, one rule could be a procedure for when Tribal Council seats are all vacated at the same time. Pigsley and Dorsay wrote in March that reducing the quorum would be the answer during crises, but obviously it isn't, because a quorum of 0 is 0.

Another needed rule is for the annual financial audited reports to be published with the General Council. Look at the casino financial statements given to us over the years — none of them were the audited reports. What financial information was hidden? Perhaps the net revenues are non-existent?

The Gaming Revenue Distribution Plan has been presented over the years as being required by the NIGC. The NIGC only approves tribal distribution plans when there is a per capita payment from net revenues. Our tribe does not have a per capita plan. If we wanted to as a tribe, every dollar of casino profit could go to pay for just one thing that could benefit every tribal member, as long as it fits anywhere within the five categories. For example, medical coverage for every tribal member is possible without NIGC approval.

Siletz Tribal government needs a complete system of checks and balances. It needs bylaws for the General Council. Who is the Siletz Tribe? Tribal members are! Let's organize now!

Cynthia Viles